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OR, THE

Whole Religion of a CHRISTIAN.

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OF THE

# CHURCH CATECHISM.

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By CLEMENT ELLIS, M. A. Sometime Rector of Kirkby in Nottinghamshire, Prebendary

Sometime Rector of Kirkby in Nottinghamshire, Prebendar, of Southwell, and Fellow of Queen's-College, Oxon.

To which is Prefixed, A Faithful

Account of the Author's Life and Writings.

JOHN VENEER, Rector of St. Andrew's, Chichester.



Printed for C. RIVINGTON in St. Paul's Church-yard, and J. Hurron, without Temple-Bar. M. DCC. XXXVIII.



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# PREFACE.

ble strain of piety runs thro' the works of this devout author, that they merit a most distinguishing recommendation. He plainly lets us see not only his skill and judgment, but his thorough feeling and experience of those many excellent truths, which he has handled; so that we may truly say of him, That he was blessed with this peculiar privilege, of letting his reader and hearer into the secrets of his heart, as well as into the strength of his arguments.

He endeavours all along to fet religion in the clearest light, and makes the most rational representations of it, frequently exposing those doctrines which ascribe too much, as well as those which ascribe too little to human reason; such as either render

render religion very harsh, or less amiable, to creatures endued with reason and free-will; or such as endeavour to fuit and adapt it to the corrupt inclinations of men. But, above all things, the vindicating religion in general, and oppofing the scepticism and infidelity of the age, was that which he had most carefully in view; and which he hath done to very good purpose, as well in the present treatise, as in his other valuable works; as will be feen in the annexed account of his life and writings.

This explanation of the church catechism, in which the author was the more ample and full, that it might ferve for a brief and comprehensive Body of Practical Divinity, to fuch whose leisure, circumstances, or inclination allow them not to confult more voluminous performances, Mr. Ellis finished in the last year of his life; and submitted it to the confideration of fome of his brethren of the clergy, who

who highly approved of it, and with great earnestness recommended it to the press; and that it was not made publick before, was owing to his death, and other accidents.

With regard to the usefulness of this kind of works in general, we shall only observe, that the late learned archbishop WAKE hath justly taken notice, That the Reformation itself was owing to catechistical instruction; and that thereby the younger and more unlearned christians are trained up in such a fort of learning, as is most fuitable to their respective years and capacities; and further observes, that this profitable exercise of christian duty has on its fide as well the laws of the realm, as the canons of the church.

And his grace's predecessors, archbishop Sheldon in 1672, and archbishop Sancroft in 1688, directed the clergy diligently to catechise the children and youth of their parishes, and expound the grounds of religion, and common christianity in the method of the church catechism, teaching what they are to believe and to do, and what to pray for; and particularly inculcating upon them the importance and obligation of their baptismal vows.

This was the conftant practice of the pious author in his own parish, which was attended with great success; and he was the better enabled thereby to write upon a subject so familiar to him; and it must be confess'd, that he has treated it in this work in such a manner, as at the same time that it is not beyond the capacities of the young and unlearned, it is far from being unworthy of the attention of those who are arrived at riper years and more knowledge in the duties of the christian warfare.

#### AN

# ACCOUNT

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## AUTHOR'S LIFE

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AND

# WRITINGS.

R. Clement Ellis was born at Rose-Castle, in Cumberland, 1633. when the learned Dr. Potter was bishop of Carlifle. This worthy prelate had been tutor to our author's father at Queen's-College in Oxford, and afterwards removed him to Rose-Castle to manage the affairs of his temporal effate; which he did with fo much care and fidelity, as recommended him in a particular manner to his lordship's favour and Soon after our unhappy civil wars broke out, the good bishop was gathered to his fathers, and was fo happy as not to fee that terrible havock and confusion which the continuance of them afterwards introduced. Nevertheless he lived long enough to be one of

our author's god-fathers, and to take care to have him educated for some time in his own family; which in all probability laid the foundation of that piety and goodness, which were fo eminently conspicuous in him, and the early impressions which he received from the bishop, in matters of religion, were what he esteemed the peculiar blessing of his life. His lordship was the author of that excellent piece against the papists, intitled, An Answer to Charity mistaken; which being replied to by a Jesuit of great learning and abilities, produced that immortal book of Mr. Chillingworth's, intitled, The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation.

The bishop being dead, Mr. Ellis, the father, kept possession of Rose-Castle for the king, and defended it for some considerable time against the rebels; but at last was forced to furrender it at discretion, and was long detained prisoner for his firm adherence to the royal cause. He suffered very much in his own estate, which rendered him incapable of fending his fon to Oxford, whither he was defigned, when by reason of his age and other qualifications it was time for him to be admitted in that or some other university. But it providentially fell out, that the reverend Mr. Barlow, afterwards bishop of Lincoln, and Mr. Tully, afterwards principal of Edmund-hall, fellows of Queen's college in the university of Oxford, came to visit their friends in Cumberland; and finding the great

great streights which their old friend, and fellow collegian, was then reduced to, and his utter incapacity of maintaining his fon in the university, (having many younger children besides) they took his son back with them. admitted him in their own college, and maintained him there at their own expence. likewise recommended him in a very particular manner, to the favour of the worthy provoft, the reverend and learned doctor Langbain, which proved to be of no small advantage; the doctor being one of the brightest examples of the age he lived in, an eminent antiquary, and no less confiderable for languages, philosophy, and divinity; whose indefatigable labours, and immense undertakings, caused him to be particularly esteemed by archbishop Usher, Mr. Selden, and the other great luminaries of those times. He received feveral donations towards his fubfiftence there from unknown hands; with anonymous letters to certify, that those sums were in confideration of his father's fufferings. and to encourage his progress in his studies. Several fuch presents and letters he had, both before and after his being in holy orders, without his knowing from whence they came; but after the restoration of the church and royal family, he had fome reason to believe that they came from Dr. Taylor and Dr. Hammond, being part of those collections of money, put into their hands by charitable and well-disposed persons, for the support and encouragement of fuffering loyalty. The characters

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ne at characters which these two very eminent divines have fo justly obtained for their uncommon learning, exemplary piety, and inviolable integrity, are so very great and universal, that the notice which they took of Mr. Ellis's father and himself, add no small weight to those testimonies of their worth and merit, which we have from other hands. The first of them, Dr. Taylor, was born in Cambridge, and educated in Gonvil and Caius college: from whence, by archbishop Laud's means, he removed to All Souls in Oxford, where he foon displayed his wonderful parts and abilities. Being in the way to great preferment, and the civil wars breaking out, he attended the king's army in the station of a chaplain, and after that was compelled to a mean retreat in Wales; in which folitude he composed many excellent treatises, highly valued for the profoundness of judgment, richness of fancy, copiousness of invention, and general usefulness to all the purposes of a christian. From thence he removed to London, and sometime after went into Ireland; where, upon the restoration, he was made bishop of Down and Connor, and had the administration of the see of Dromore granted to him by the king. Here he farther displayed his mighty talents, and shewed with an unbounded imagination all the eloquence of orators, all the flights of poetry, together with all the strictness and regularity of the deepest casuists. Doctor Hammond was also a most excellent divine, and one of the glories of the

liament divines, instead of disputing, as was expected, produced a set studied discourse or lecture, which he read to the rest of the commissioners; but was so far from obtaining any advantage from this stratagem, that Dr. Hammond immediately returned a clear, sull and complete answer to it, in which he took up no more time than it was possible for him to

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This great man, notwithstanding his admirable learning and piety, was by the iniquity of the times driven from Oxford; from whence he retired to the house of Sir John Packington in Worcestershire; where after several years living in the prosoundest devotion and humility, and most unparallel'd charity, he expired in the 56th year of his age, about a month before the glorious restoration; which if he had surviv'd, he would have adorned the church in one of

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its highest stations, king Charles the second having fully intended to reward his incomparable merit and great sufferings for his royal father, himself and the constitution, with one of the bishopricks that were then vacant.

Besides these two great men, our author hath often mentioned the favours which he then received from Sir Robert Southwell, a worthy member of Queen's college; at whose request, he first published the first-fruits of his labours, The Genteel Sinner: The occasion of which book was purely accidental. Mr. Ellis, and some other young gentlemen being met together one evening, in the faid college, after fome free and ingenuous discourse among them, Mr. Ellis was defired to give them the character of a gentleman, which he did without any premeditation, in fuch a manner, as not only proved a very agreeable entertainment to the company, but also prevailed on them to defire him to put his thoughts upon that subject into writing. He went about this immediately, whilst his fancy was warm, and sat up the whole night. The next day he presented them with his papers, which were shewn to his tutor, and fo well approved of by him, that he put him upon a review of them, in order to make them publick. He was not above four years standing in the university when this work was performed, fo that we may justly style it an early specimen of his parts and learning; as likewise of his understanding in facred matters, and a delightful earnest

# AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. vii

carnest of those great benefits, which the church of God might expect to reap from the labours of his maturer and more advanced

age.

His time at the university was wholly dedicated to fludy, and innocent conversation, which he much delighted in. His learning and parts were publickly taken notice of, and being in a short time admitted to a fellowship of Queen's college, he became a credit and honour to that learned body. He was ordained by doctor Skinner, the then deprived bishop of Oxford, at his house in Langton, near Oxford, on the tenth of December, Anno Domini 1656. This bishop was almost the only one that conferred holy orders during the troubles, and was thought at his death to have fent more labourers into the vineyard, than all the bishops of his time. Mr. Ellis being thus in orders, became a constant preacher, either at St. Peter's in the East, or at Abingdon, till the year 1660, when the lord William, then marquis, and afterwards duke of Newcastle, took him to be his domestick chaplain, upon the recommendation of Dr. Morley and Dr. Barlow. This noble lord, and both of these worthy clergymen, as well for their own fakes, as for the fake of Mr. Ellis, deferve to have a short character given of them in this place. His grace was not indeed a man of much literature, but then he had the happiness of exceeding good natural parts, and an excellent understanding, and often said such a 4 things

#### viii An ACCOUNT of the

things in conversation, as those of the best stock of learning had no reason to be ashamed of. He was likewise a very fine gentleman, of great generofity, loyalty and courage, and fully accomplished in those qualities of horsemanship, dancing, and fencing, which accompany good breeding, in which he much delighted. He took an uncommon delight in poetry and musick, and for that reason he chose Sir William Davenant, a most eminent poet, to be lieutenant general of his ordnance. His courage was invincible, and by fome thought to be rather too keen than otherwife. Nothing could have inchanted him out of those paths of pleasure, which he enjoyed in a full and ample fortune, but the height of honour, and ambition to ferve the king when he faw him in diffress, and abandoned by fuch as had the nearest This rous'd him into many obligations. and great services for his majesty in the He loved monarchy, as it was the North. foundation and support of the peerage; the church, as it maintained the splendor and fecurity of the crown; and religion, as it enforced the order of obedience due to both, and abhorred every thing that was likely to disturb the publick peace. He manifested upon all occasions, that his mind and foul were truly great; for as he strictly kept up the pomp, and state, and dignity of a general, vet this was rather for the fake of discipline, than to gratify any inclination towards vanity; his marching into York, in a quiet and still.

still, rather than in a triumphant manner, after his great victory over the lord Fairfax, at Adderton-Moor, was a sufficient proof that his heart was as much above pride, as it was above fear. Dr. Barlow hath been mentioned already; and therefore no more is requisite to be faid of him in this place, than that he was a man of confiderable learning, of a fweet and obliging temper, and one that bore a paternal affection towards the clergy over whom he prefided. His strict adhering to Calvinistical principles led him into some difficulties, out of which he could not extricate himself so handsomely as his character and station required. These are at large related by the learned and pious Mr. Nelson in his life of bishop Bull, and are, for any thing I could ever hear, the only blemish of his life; and remain as a caution to good men, against a too great fondness for this or that way of thinking, because they have been for several years accustomed to it. For to this inexpresfible unhappiness, the continuance of differences and disputes in the christian church. are in a great measure to be ascribed. And if fuch as are otherwise good men, would be willing to fee their mistakes, and frankly to acknowledge them when they do fee them; the cause of truth would suffer but little from those, whose lives and conversations are a fcandal to any fort or party of professed christians. Dr. Morley was born in London, and educated at Christ-Church in Oxford, and was afterwards taken into the particular favour of

king Charles the first, and made one of his chaplains. His loyalty to his royal mafter was inviolable, and his affiftances in some of his greatest distresses were very considerable. Being an exile with king Charles the Ild, he got into the great acquaintance and efteem of several learned foreigners, as Rivet, Heinsius, Salmafius, Bochart, &c. Which made him fitter for the greatest employments at the return of the king; who generously rewarded him, first with the bishoprick of Worcester, and then with the rich one of Winchester. telling him, That he knew he would not be the richer for it; which in one respect proved true, by reason of the vast sums he laid out in repairing and rebuilding his palaces, and his munificent benefactions as well as charitable donations. One of which is the college of matrons in Trinity Church-Tard, in Winchester, which contains a decent and tolerable reception for the widows of ten clergymen in small circumstances. But through the villainy or carelessness of those whom the good bishop employed in this affair, the apartments are not fo commodious, neither are the falaries for their maintenance, by reafon of the present dearness of provisions, so competent as could be wished, and as his Lordship intended; and therefore I am willing to hope, that it will please God, at some time or other, to stir up some well-disposed member or members of the same cathedral, to make fome addition to this pious and charitable foundation. He was a person of extenfive

tensive knowledge and experience, and tho' he was a strict churchman in opposition to all forts of dissenters, yet he was a great Calvinist, and esteemed one of the main patrons of that persuasion; and having led a pious and primitive life, he died full of days and honour, in the 87th year of his age.

Mr. Ellis being thus settled in this noble family, his grave and prudent deportment procured him no small reputation in it, and he hath been often heard to fay, that the greatest personages belonging to it would suffer themfelves to be reproved by him, when any thing was done or spoken amiss: A freedom rarely to be met with in this licentious age! Here, without much, if with any digression at all, may be related a certain passage, which some of his friends, and particularly those of his own family, were very well acquainted with. A certain gentleman of extraordinary note, being one day at dinner with the marquis, took the liberty, according to his usual custom, to scatter some profane jests against the christian revelation, and the blessed author of it, and in a sceptical way to deny the same, &c.

The marquis spoke to his chaplain to anfwer him, which at first he modestly waved, and said, That if the gentleman was in earnest, he would endeavour to give him satisfaction at a more seasonable time, in those points he pretended to doubt of, and not then when they were at dinner; but being urged by the said gentleman, who went on with his discourse, Mr. Ellis told him, that he should be likely to

offend

offend him by that reply, which he judged then necessary to make. The gentleman giving free liberty of speech, and promising to take nothing amis, Mr. Ellis said, he would answer him, or do something towards it, by putting fome questions to him, which he craved a direct answer to. The first question was, Do you know your self to be Sir -? To which he answered, That he doubted of that, or might do fo. The fecond question was, Whether he knew that he was then talking with him, and asking the former question? To which he answered in the negative. Mr. Ellis then thought fit to put an end to the dispute by telling him, that when Sir — should come to know himself to be so, and fo far return'd to his understanding and fenses, as to be convinced that he was then talking with him, and asking those questions, it would be time to dispute more serious matters, and not before. The gentleman faid, he was rude and unmannerly; which the marquis denied from the liberty of speech before granted. So nice are we of our own honour, and fo regardless of the honour of God! This was a imart reply, as well as rebuke, to a person that was too prone to play upon facred things, to turn them to jest and ridicule, and to pretend to act the part of a Sceptick (who doubts of every thing) upon all occasions. Yet another part of this story must not be omitted, more honourable for the faid gentleman; who having at the fame time a very good living vacant, made a tender of it the next morning

## AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c.

morning to Mr. Ellis, in a letter, or by a message to the marquis: (no doubt in confideration of Mr. Ellis's merit, as well as his own unworthiness, in ridiculing the facred truths of our religion the day before) But the marquis would not let him accept of this preferment, hoping in some short time to make as good provision for him. As this was an argument of the gentleman's ingenuity and good-nature, fo it gives us hopes to believe, that his principles were better than his talk; and his ferious thoughts very different from his witty, or loofer expressions in conversation. And when the same person came to die, (as a reverend person then attending him hath witneffed) he declared, that he always believed the truth of the christian revelation, and Jesus Christ to be the Messiah, notwithstanding any seeming opposition given to them by way of discourse; for which he highly blamed himself, and begged of God to pardon it. It is to be wished that our bold retainers to Atheism and Deism would more feriously consider from this example, what they are doing, and not to infult our holy religion in fo rude a manner as they do, from the example of a person, that had as great a share of wit and understanding, as any of them can pretend to, and was advanced to great honour, and eminent stations in the government some years before his death. God grant that they may repent of this their wickedness in time, (as we hope that great man did) and that fuch blasphemers

of the truth, and impugners of our faith, may be more effectually reftrained by those that have authority to do it; and that it may not rise up in judgment against the present generation, for permitting such vile wretches, with such an air of considence and boasting, to expose and ridicule that religion, which is now so happily planted in these nations, and which cost our christian ancestors so much pains, and (as may be said) so much blood in

holy martyrdoms to accomplish it.

But to return to our author: Soon after this dispute or skirmish before-mentioned, he dedicated a small treatise to his lord, against profane scoffing at religion, which most probably was occasioned by this conversation. Nevertheless he had frequent opportunities of feeing how that vicious humour prevailed among some witty persons, and what endeavours were used to engage the great men on their fide, and bring them to their party. This he watched against, and opposed with all prudence and difcretion, whilst he continued in that great family, which was about two years; and then he removed to Kirkby, a rectory in the county of Nottingham, to which his noble patron had prefented him.

He found his parish in a miserable disorder, the sad effects of the civil war being too notoriously to be seen in it, as he hath frequently been heard to complain. Several that had been officers and soldiers in the parliament army, lived in it at that time, and were not only tainted with Antinomian principles,

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but had likewise corrupted others. These principles do in a great measure continue to this very day, and that too among all forts of people in the kingdom. Mr. Baxter, in his Scripture Go/pel Defended, &c. hath given us a large account of them; and their errors, as described by him, amount to no less than an hundred; and therefore what he fays of them is too prolix to be inferted in this place. The present lord bishop of London hath given us a brief, and well nigh full description of them, in the 64th page of his second Pastoral Letter, in the following words: " During " the times of confusion, many of the " preachers had not only forborn to inculcate " the duties of morality, but had laboured " to depreciate them; to persuade the people " that faith was all, and works nothing. " therefore the clergy after the restoration, " in order to take off those unhappy im-" pressions, found themselves obliged to in-" culcate, with more than ordinary dili-" gence, the necessity of moral duties in the " christian life, and to labour to restore them " to their proper share in the Christian " scheme. And it would certainly have " been no injury to those of the separation, " if they had forborn to profcribe the preach-" ing up of good works, by calling it legal " preaching, fince those of them, as his " lordship observes further, who with the " honest view I have mentioned, laboured " the most zealously in that way, were, at " the same time, as zealous to explain to the " people

### xvi An ACCOUNT of the

" people the great work of our redemption by " Fefus Christ, as the means of salvation which " God hath appointed; the corruption and " mifery into which mankind was funk by " the fall of our first parents, the necessity of " a Mediator to recover them, and restore " them to the favour of God; the incarna-" tion of the Son of God for that end; " the goodness of God in appointing his own " Son to be the Mediator between him and " us; the comfort of having a mediator of " our own nature; the expiation made for " fin by the fuffering of Christ; the wis-" dom of God in making Christ a facrifice " for fin; the inestimable value of his suffer-" ings for the redemption of all mankind; our " justification by faith in him, and fanctifica-" tion by the Holy Spirit, and his intercession " for us at God's right-hand. They likewife " taught, that baptism is an initiation into a " new covenant with God; and the Lord's " fupper a renewal of that covenant, and " admonished people of the great Duties " of affembling in the publick worship of "God, and frequently receiving the holy fa-" crament, and hearing and reading the " holy scriptures, as their only fure and com-" plete rule both of faith and practice." In a word, they made it appear in as full and clear a manner as any reasonable man, can defire, That faith in Christ is the foundation of a christian's title to heaven, and on the other hand, that repentance and good works are the necessary conditions of obtaining it. therefore

#### AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. xvii therefore there are some who set up the moral law, as fufficient of itself, without any regard to christianity, and are, in so doing, very vain and prefumptuous; fo I think the same may be as justly said of those, who look upon trufting in Christ to be their whole duty, and so excuse themselves from the obfervation of the moral law. Those inhabitants of Kirkby, whom our author found there leaven'd with Antinomian principles. shewed the greatest dislike to the settlement of the monarchy and church upon their antient foundations, which occasioned no small disturbance to this good man. And yet, by a prudent management of affairs, seasonable applications, and a mild and gentle behaviour towards them, he wrought a very great reformation in a few years; and many of those that had professed the greatest aversion to the establishment of the church, became hearty friends to it, and were thoroughly reconciled to the constitutions and orders of it: infomuch that in the last thirty years of his life at Kirkby, (a pretty large country parish) he did not believe he had three diffenters in it. Notwithstanding this his great service to the church, he had the misfortune to be represented as no real friend to it, and too great a favourer to those that diffent from it; and how far these reports were spread to his difadvantage, was very well known to many, infomuch that he was not thought worthy of a small dignity in the church. But that excellent prelate archbishop Sharp, who was a

## xviii An ACCOUNT of the

true judge of neglected worth, knew him better; and soon after his consecration design'd him a Prebend in the collegiate church of Southwell, to which he was collated in the year 1693. The good man was no way defirous of it, and would have refign'd it afterwards on the account of his infirmity, which (as he modeftly judged) would not permit him to attend the service and business of the faid church; but the archbishop would not fuffer his modefly to prevail. This help'd to raise his reputation, and occasioned several of his detractors to believe themselves mistaken in the opinion which they had formerly conceived of him. And if clergymen, without any just cause, must be thus misrepresented and stigmatiz'd, who can help it? It was his comfort that he fuffer'd in this point, with fome of the best and wisest men, that our church hath been honoured with. as all virtues, whatfoever, have their proper bounds, their excesses and defects; so zeal among the rest hath its limits, which it must not pass, as long as it continues a christian duty. It is not a fingle virtue, but a complication of a great many; and among these must be reckon'd prudence, humility, and gentleness, as well as others; fo that as a lukewarmness or coldness in religion, is a criminal defect of it, so inordinate heat and spiritual fury is an excess, altogether as unjuffi-No religion is true, which is not peaceable, as well as pure: No zeal is truly spiritual, that is not also charitable, nay chiefly

AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. chiefly so; all other zeal, besides this, is not a christian grace, but religious madness. And what good it hath ever done will be very hard to shew, though, on the other hand, the mischiefs and ravages of it have been altogether as frequent as they are terrible. Nor is it perhaps very easy to disprove me, if I should affert, that the hottest zealots are, generally speaking, soonest cold, when their worldly interest shall incline them another way, or those encouragements by which they are at present supported, shall by time or accident be removed. And, indeed, where the heat of mens zeal does not depend upon any felfish or worldly views, and is not kept to its full height by the mere countenance and encouragement of others, but depends in a great measure upon the natural temper of our bodies, which is very often the case, we may say of it, as bishop Taylor does, in his Rule and Exercise of Holy Dying, page 251, of every raging passion; " That " when it is not under discipline, and the " conduct of reason, and the proportions " of temperate humanity, it runs passionately "the way it happens, and by-and-by as " greedily to another fide, being fway'd by " its own weight, and driven any-whither by " chance, in all its purfuits having no rule, " but to do all it can, and spend itself in " hafte, and expire with some shame, and " much undecency." And therefore I cannot but look upon the advice of an excellent writer.

writer, whose zeal for the church can never be called in question, to be worthy of the confideration, and indeed the practice of every wife and ferious member of our communion \*. — Use no provocation or exasperation towards diffenters, nor countenance those inconfiderable persons that have no other way to shew their zeal to the church, but by reviling and vexing those that differ from it. It were good all governors of the church did ( and I hope they do ) imitate Memnon, the general for Darius against Alexander; who, when he found one of his foldiers, instead of darts casting scoffs at the enemy, tells him, you are not entertained, ut maledicas, sed ut pugnes. For besides that this carriage, whereever it is, is but counted a strong argument of a weak cause, it stirs up the mud of mens passions, clouds their understandings, and by representing men worse than they are, tempts them to be worse than they would be: And if I fee I shall be always noted with my former ignorance and folly, I am deprived of one of the greatest encouragements to forfake it.

That our author sometimes conversed with dissenters, and treated them with humanity and kindness, is confessed by his friends; but that he betrayed the interest of the church in any particular, or shewed any dislike to its regular constitutions, is denied. His business

<sup>\*</sup> The author of a serious and compassionate inquiry into the causes of the neglect and contempt of the protestant religion, and church of England.

#### AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c.

was to gain Diffenters by all the prudent and wife methods of reconciliation: He knew how to make allowances to the prejudices of education, and to those mistaken opinions which men have been long accustomed to; he knew how to govern himself towards them. and what gentle methods were required in order to their conviction: Yet, notwithstanding, the union and peace of the church was fo highly efteemed by him, and looked upon as fo precious a jewel, and fo necessary to be preserved, that he has been seen to be a little earnest upon this point, that the main body of the Diffenters, especially their ministers, did not contribute more to the better and more firm establishment of them. Not but that he thought fomething might be done on the church's part in the methods of condescension and love, to procure so great a bleffing to it, without intrenching too much upon its constitution. And let all those treacherous and rotten members of our communion, who, without any right or title to fo excellent a character, call themselves moderate men, for no other reason than because they are always ready to injure and betray the church, notwithstanding a partial or total conformity to her doctrine and discipline, let all those, I say, be affured that they are no less the scorn and contempt of all sober, intelligent, and conscientious Dissenters, than of all other wife and good men, though the posture of their affairs may require them to behave towards them with a fair outside. b 3

Our

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Our author had a foul above fuch low and vile perfidy, his fincerity and integrity were inviolable. He loved the church heartily, and pity'd those that were missed, and endeavour'd ( nor were his endeavours, as we have obferved before, fruitless or in vain) in the spirit of meekness to recover and bring them back to the right fold. But to fneak and fawn, or to act a double part, was what he had always the utmost abhorrence of, and could not be accused of without great rashness, indiscretion, and inconsideration, not to fay injustice. I shall close this head with an apology of the same nature, which was made in behalf of a dignitary of the church of Chichester, upon an accusation, that he was too remiss and negligent in promoting the interest of the crown in the choice of parliament men. The person that makes it, observes, in the first place, that the accuser was possibly a man of no ill principles, but of much heat, and angry that fuch as agreed with him in opinion, were not likewise of the same frame and temper, and equally violent in executing their defigns. And then he goes on to speak of the man against whom the charge was brought, Dr. Stradling, then dean and precentor of that cathedral. He observes that the Doctor's pulse did not beat so high, nor did his blood circulate so quick, nor was he by the bent of his nature fo much fitted for a popular and tumultuary canvass; and therefore the want of passions was by his zealous accuser easily misinterpreted lukewarmness;

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and the observance of decency in his applications to the electors, seemed to infer an indifference in the choice; but after his ingenious and manly answer to his accusation, a great minister of state was pleased to assure him in a letter, that his majesty was satisfied, that he was both able and willing to promote the king's service with as much zeal as his accuser, and with much more sincerity, discretion and success.

Soon after our author was settled at Kirkby, he was married to the daughter of Sir Thomas Remington of Lond, in the East-Riding of Yorkshire, by whom he had four sons, and one daughter. Two of his sons and his daughter survived him, but of these there is now but

one of his fons living.

His wife died in July 1691, and from that stroke his greater infirmities (which afterwards fell on him) were dated. His conftitution was always crazy and infirm, which probably was occasioned by his hard study; for he seldom slept above four or five hours in the night, and most usually got to his study by four of the clock in the morning. both in winter and fummer. He continued to do so, 'till within a very few years of his death, so that he may be reckoned in the number. of the greatest students. His indefatigable industry appears from the great number of manuscripts of several kinds, which he hath left behind him, having much addicted himfelf to fuch composures. The reading of the holy fcriptures, and confidering the true fenfe b 4 and

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and meaning of them, was that which he chiefly delighted in: And, if the old faying is true, Bonus scriptuarius est bonus theologus, he might justly be esteemed one of the best of our divines. In all the useful and neceffary parts of learning he was very well versed, though least of all in the critical part, which a long confinement to a country parish might occasion. His talent in poetry was not inconfiderable, as appears from some manuscripts of his in that kind, fair and correct, as though they had been defign'd for the press. The instruction of some gentlemens fons in his own family, was an employment which for some years he was willing to undertake; and among other things it was his particular care to form their minds to a fober sense of religion betimes; which feveral have found the benefit of. He was a courteous and goodnatured man, and of a very pleafant and chearful temper. There was nothing of fourness or moroseness in it, though his countenance, and hard fludying, might prefage the contrary. He could fay as pleafant things as any man, when he had a mind to give himfelf the liberty of any facetious discourse, but yet his mirth was always tempered with innocence and gravity. He delighted to converse with scholars, and was likewise of a very communicative temper, the peculiar excellency of a learned man. He was a great encourager of young divines, fo obliging in his temper to them, fo ready to instruct them, and fo willing to refolve their doubts and scruples,

AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. XXV scruples, when proposed to him, that no one went from him, but with pleasure and fatisfaction. In any matter of disputation, or argument, no one was more free from passion or positiveness; no one more happy in delivering himself, and in a way both of argument and speech, that both entertained and convinced. This was the universal opinion and declaration of all that knew him, and in any familiar manner conversed with him. a word, he was a most useful person, and a very great bleffing to the neighbourhood, especially to his brethren the clergy; his whole conversation being fincere and honest, discreet and prudent, grave and profitable, and his whole life one intire piece, and continued testimony of his piety and devotion towards God, of his friendship and charity to men, and of his humility and fobriety towards himself. His labours in preaching, catechifing, and vifiting the fick, were extraordinary, and beyond most examples; and fuch a godlike temper and disposition appeared in every thing that he faid or did, that it commanded respect and veneration from every one that heard or faw it; and it must be owned, that scarce ever was known a better man, or a more fincere christian. was never wanting in any of the duties or good offices of charity, being of a very kind and fympathizing disposition, to all under any calamity or necessity. And as to temperance, he was a very rare example of it, abstaining from all forts of drinks that were itrong;

strong; making his eating in the general course of his Life, a fort of abstinence from flesh-meats, which he very sparingly fed upon, imagining that his conflitution required all this from him, though probably he was mistaken in it. His death, which he was the better prepared for by a lingering illness, was attended with all the tokens of an humble and devout foul, and a spirit intirely resign'd to the will of God. The prayers of the church, which he valued above others, were to his last minutes made use of. He received the holy facrament feveral times, and had always in the time of his health a monthly facrament in his church; and during the whole course of his fickness, as well as at his departure, such a power and presence of God's good Spirit seemed to be afforded him, that it was the greatest ease and pleasure for him to die; and all doubtfulness and uncertainty, concerning his everlafting state, was with true reason, and upon good grounds, removed from him; according to that of the Pfalmiff, Pfal. xxxvii. 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. Upon the 28th of June 1700, he departed this life to the great forrow of his relations and friends, but to his eternal joy and gain; For bleffed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them, Rev. xiv. 13.

Having thus presented the reader with a short account of the life of this excellent

AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. xxvii and judicious person, whose name is generally well known already by those many useful and practical discourses, which he printed in his life-time, and the good acceptance which they met with from persons of all ranks; I shall now proceed to give some account of those treatises, and likewise of those which have been published fince his death, together with the contents of the enfuing volume, which, I affure the reader, are the genuine works of the same reverend author, and such as were defigned by him for publick view, having received the most exact finishing and preparation for the press from his own hand. As to his writings in general, we may justly fay, that he hath exhibited the utmost proof of his good skill in making things plain and eafy. Perspicuity and good sense were the things he had chiefly in view in all his compositions, as best accommodated to his principal aim of making them useful to the meanest reader: And though fometimes he may feem to floop too low in condescension to their weaker capacities; yet on that score, it is presumed, that his discourses may be as instructive and edifying, and do as much good, as those which carry greater beauty and ornament in composition and style, though nothing more of true piety and fense, along with them; and yet I may venture to fay, that, generally speaking, nothing is wanting to our author in all the good qualities of a christian writer, to recommend his works to the more judicious and impartial, and to render them very use-

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ful to the world. But that which doth fo peculiarly recommend them is, that admirable strain of piety and goodness, which runs through the feveral parts of them. He plainly lets us fee not only his skill and judgment, but his thorough feeling and experience of those many excellent truths which he hath handled; fo that we may truly fay of him, that he was bleffed with this peculiar privilege, of letting his reader into the fecrets of his heart, as well as into the strength of his arguments. He endeavours all along to fet religion in the clearest and best light, and makes the most agreeable and rational reprefentations of it; frequently exposing those doctrines which ascribe too much, or too little to human reason; such as either render religion very harsh, or less amiable to creatures endued with reason, and free-will; or fuch as endeavour to fuit and adapt it to the corrupt inclinations of men. But above all things, the vindicating religion in general, and opposing the scepticism and infidelity of the present age, was that which he had more carefully in view, and which he hath done to very good purpose. That reproach and contempt which is poured on religion by the Deifts, and other sceptical persons, gave no fmall disturbance to this good man; and therefore he fet himself to oppose them with all his might, and composed feveral excellent treatifes to that purpose. His little book before mentioned, intitled the Genteel Sinner, which he writ in his younger days, and hath been

#### AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. XXIX been fo well received by the world, was the first of them. The design of this book is, first, to ridicule the vicious, and, secondly, to encourage the virtuous part of the nobility and gentry. It contains 261 pages, in a large duodecimo, and a small letter, and yet was the production of a fingle fortnight. And for this reason, it is not so correct a piece as it would have been, if he had been allowed his own time and leifure to fit it for a publick view; for his time, it feems, was then too precious a jewel to have a great deal of it employed in a work of this nature. He hath taken care to tell the criticks in his preface or epiftle to the reader, that he smiles at all that he was likely to receive at their hands; and then readily and ingeniously faves them the labour of fifting his performance, by acknowledging the faults which they were like to find in it. " The style, 'tis true, is " rough; I had rather be told of it, than lose so " much time as to fmooth it. Many things " are blunt and flat; it is my humour of-" ten, to prefer a plain truth before a witty " fancy. The phrase in many places is " tart and provoking; I hope it will appear " in all my actions, that I study not to please, but profit." I shall give the reader a small taste of what he says in his descriptions, both of the bad and good fort of gentry, which as they were undoubtedly just, at the time they were drawn up, fo, alas! the only difference betwixt that and the present, is,

that the numbers of those to whom the first

description is adapted, are beyond measure increased and multiplied; and so, by consequence, those who were intitled to the latter. are become so very few and thin, that a man may justly fay in the words of the Wife Man, counting one by one, to find out the account; One man among a thousand have I found. " If there be fuch a fin, saith our author, in the abuse of words, as some " do think there is; and if it be true, that a " great part of this abuse lies in giving names " unto things contrary to their natures; never was there a greater error of this kind " committed than here; for never was an " honest name more abused, than this of " gentleman. Indeed, it is to be feared, that " having been fo long misapplied, it will at " last find the like hard measure with those " other once more honest names of tyrant " and fophister, and from a title of honour " degenerate into a term of the greatest dis-" grace and infamy. It is indeed already " made to be of no better fignification than " this, to denote a person of a licentious and " an unbridled life; for though it be, as 'tis " used, a word of a very uncertain and equi-" vocal found, and given at random to per-" fons of far different, nay contrary humours, " descents and merits; yet if we look upon " him that in this fad age comes first in play, " and carries both the feather and the bell, " as the first horse in the team, away from " all the rest; a gentleman must be thought " only fuch a man, as may without controul " do

#### AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. xxxi " do what he lifts, and fin with applause: " One that esteems it base and ungenteel to " fear a God, to own a law, or practice a " religion; one who has studied to bring fin " fo much into fashion, and with so much " unhappy fuccess, that he is now account-" ed a clown, that is not proud to be " thought a finner; and as ridiculous, as an " antick, who will not, without all scruple, " proclaim himself an atheist. Some of the " wifest in the present world have of a long time " (ashamed, I suppose, to be known by the " fame name with fuch a monster) thought it " more fit to call him spark and ranter; " and indeed the former name carries fo much " of the fire of Hell in the fignification, the " other so much of the noise of Hell in the " found, as may almost suit with the gentleman's actions. But the proudest vice is " ashamed to wear its own face long: nor " dare I believe the devil to be much in love " with his own name; I am fure neither is " willing to be thought fuch as in truth they " are; but wickedness has worn virtue's " mask quite threadbare; and Satan hath fo " often appeared like an angel of light, that "'tis now evident, he is not enamoured of " his own form. And thus had the gentle-" man too rather deserve, than wear the de-" vil's livery; though he be willing enough " to be the man, yet he abhors the name. "Thus he thinks virtue and vice, like his " honour and reputation, no more than the " creatures of a popular breath; and that

" his

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" his eternal happiness (as his temporal " estate) is intailed upon the bare name alone; " and by a little alteration of that he may " (when he pleases) translate his title from " Hell to Heaven: So fondly folicitous he " is (that I may use his own language) to " trapan his own foul, and by the lamentable " imposture of a borrowed name, cheat her " out of a most glorious inheritance. Hence he " endeavours a little more to civilize the title, " and calls himself, in a more pleasing lan-" guage, gallant. In this he is apt to fancy " charm enough to bring even heaven itself " in love with him; and make it, as the trees " did Orpheus, to follow him wherefoever he " goeth: and certainly fo it must, and with " fome speed too, or he shall never see it, " feeing he is always running, as fast as he " can, the quite contrary way. But, alas! " this is all he is like to gain by the pitiful " exchange; that whereas the ungrateful " found of the former times did fo startle the " devil, that he was ready to quit his habi-" tation, either as jealous of a rival in the " very words, or else afraid of a discovery, " hearing his own names become fo com-" mon, he is now bribed to flay by the flat-" tery of this latter, and fecurely lodges in " the gallant's breaft, without the leaft fear " of disturbance. But seeing the gallant is so " great a lover of new names, I hope he will " not be troubled, if I make bold to add one " more, and call him, with no less reason, " but in more words, the devil's ghost: For

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" whilst Satan is put to a large expence of " time and pains to haunt and seduce others. " Here he meets with one not half fo coy, " but fuch an one, as by his unreasonable " kindness seems to be a trouble rather to " the very fiend, by haunting the devil. " And doubtless, if he go but one half so fast " a while longer, as he has done of late " years, he will tire and puzzle the whole " numerous host of hell, to invent a variety " of objects answerable to that of his hu-" mour. To speak him out, a little more " plainly, our English gentleman, as now " a-days we commonly meet him, is fuch a " ftrange kind of thing, that no one name " will fit him, fuch an heterogeneous foul, " that no less than a combination of all the " vices in the world must be summoned in, " to make up a partial description of him. " Of an effential definition I hardly think " him capable, left thereby, granting him a " complete essence, I should be forced, at " least, in a metaphysical notion, to call him " good.—Such a complicacy of evils goes to " his constitution, that ere we shall be able " to fit him with a name, we must borrow " it from Satan himself, and call him legion. " As fin and vanity make up his very effence; " fo can nothing but wonder and shame com-" pose his character. In concluding the character of a true gen-

In concluding the character of a true gentleman, he fays,— "Whilft I go about to "give you the character of a true gentleman, "I am fallen into that of a christian. And,

c indeed,

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" indeed, no wonder; for there is fuch a ne-" ceffary connection betwixt these two, that " they feem to be no more than the different " names of the same man. If you desire to " have his picture in a less compass, here it The true gentleman is one that is God's " fervant, the world's mafter, and his own man. " His virtue is his business, his study his re-" creation, contentedness his rest, and hap-" piness his reward. Cod is his Father, the " church is his mother, the faints his bre-" thren, all that need him, his friends, and " heaven his inheritance. Religion is his " mistress, loyalty and justice her ladies of honour; devotion is his chaplain, chastity " his chamberlain, sobriety his butler, tem-" perance his cook, hospitality his house-"keeper, providence his steward, charity " his treasurer, piety his mistress of the " house, and discretion, to let in, and let " out, as is most fit. Thus is his whole fa-" mily made up of virtues, and he the true " master of the family. He is necessitated " to take the world in his way to heaven, but " he walks through it as fast as he can; and " all his business, by the way, is to make " himself and others happy. Take him all " in two words, he is a man, and a christian. -I have an apology at hand, for giving " you this rude and imperfect draught of his " picture. That I give it you at all, it is " my obedience to his commands; that you " receive it so mis-shapen and ill-proportion'd, besides the little experience, and less skill

### AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. XXXV

of the painter, he has this to fay for himfelf; he could hardly tell where, being
absent from such as you, Sir, to find a true
gentleman to draw it by.—Indeed, an
atheist and a gentleman, in the opinion of
many, have for a long time been either
synonymous, or at least convertible terms.
I dare not, I confess, have such hard
thoughts of all, though I could heartily
wish, they would rather take some pains
by their lives and conversations to prove
this to be an absurd, than stretch their
lungs to cry out upon it, and swear it to
be a rash and uncharitable, censure."

The fecond book, which our author wrote in defence of christianity, hath been taken fome notice of already. The title of it is, The Vanity of Scoffing at the Christian Faith, in a Letter to a Witty Gentleman. I have not been able, by any means, to get a fight of this book, and therefore the reader must be deprived of an extract, which in these times of ours, as well as that which it was written in, would without all doubt be of fingular advantage. For, as it was written and published after due deliberation, and defign'd for the use of persons of quality, so I question not but that 'tis a correct, and well-finished piece, and that it folidly proves and maintains what the title of it professes. Besides these, our author wrote a book on the folly of atheism, demonstrating the same to the capacity of the most unlearned reader, as it is truly fet forth in the title page of the same book. And in the preface to it, he ob-

2 ferves.

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ferves, - " That the abounding of all forts " of wickedness, and profaneness, and the " great indulgence people give every-where " to themselves in all manner of vice and vanity, their deriding of ferious piety, " mocking at a conscientious strictness, and " regularity of life, and even glorying in " their own fins, which they know to be " against the plainest laws of God, and threat-" ned by him with no less than eternal dam-" nation; feemed to him a most evident " fign, that men do not really believe there " is a God, and therefore thought discourses " against atheism very needful: And 'till " men were thoroughly convinc'd that there " is a God over them, though poffibly by " force they may be kept from doing some forts of evil, they can never be reformed, " or persuaded to be good." Discourses against atheism have employed many learned pens, and the arguments produced against it, are usually fetched from the fountains and treasures of philosophy, which are generally too abstrufe and difficult for men of ordinary capacities to understand: But our author obferving, that fuch wicked principles began to spread among the ordinary fort of common people, and that many were infected and poifoned with them, he purposely composed his treatife against atheism for their use, being fensible, "That men of weaker understandings frand in need of short and plain difse courfes, fuch as they can from their necesfary business get time to read, and such as, "reading,

AUTHOR'S LIFE, Oc. XXXVII " reading, they are able to understand;" and for their fakes did he publish that plain and useful treatise above-mention'd. other books which he lived to publish, are no less excellent in their kind; and among those, I will crave leave to mention a little one, which he chose to be diffinguished by in some of his later discourses; intitled, The Sum of Christianity, which is deservedly reckon'd one of the best of its kind that was ever printed; and hath been distributed in great numbers among the poorer fort of people in his own, and other counties, together with his Scripture Catechism, no less excellent, in that judicious and pertinent application of the holy scriptures, to the several parts of the Church Catechism. These books were defign'd for common use and benefit, and to be purchased at an easy price for the poorer fort of people; and which, in a great measure, did fully answer the expectation of our author, in the feveral impressions which were made of them. The other treatifes which he lived to publish, were, I. A Grammar for the use of his children, intitled Magnum in Parvo, an English Guide to the Latin Tongue. 2. The Rest for the Heavyladen. 3. The Communicants Guide. 4. The first Edition of his Catechism, to which was added a short Discourse of the Being of a God, and the Truth of Scripture. 5. A Letter to a Friend, reflecting on part of Mr. Sargent's Letter to Dr. Stillingfleet, then Dean of St. Paul's. 6. The Reflecter's Defence of his Letter, &c.

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&c. 7. The Protestant Resolved, that there is no Necessity of turning Roman Catholick for Salvation. 8. The Necessity of serious Consideration, and the Danger of delaying Repentance. 9. Several fingle Sermons at Affizes, Lectures, and other Occasions. As also two Discourses, one on Prov. xix. 21. The other on Phil. ii. 3. About three years after his death, there was a defign of publishing a great part of the manuscripts which were found in his fludy, by fubscription, and propofals were accordingly made, which met with good encouragement; but some difference afterwards arising, concerning the same, betwixt the Bookfeller and the Publisher, it was refolved to lay afide the fubscription, and to publish them in parts, and by degrees. Some of them had not only had our author's last hand to them, but were likewise licens'd for the press by the reverend Dr. Barker, and Dr. Isham, though the printing of them, was for some reasons suspended.

The first volume of them was published in the year 1704. It contains three discourses. One on the Parable of Dives and Lazarus. The second on that of the unjust Steward. And the third on that of the ten Virgins. What was said of them by the publisher is very just, and I shall not pretend to add any thing thereto: "As to these discourses upon the parables, saith he, which are now offered, the reader shall not be prepossessed with any particular account, or commendation of them; it is hoped that they will be able to speak for themselves, and obtain his fa-

# AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. xxxix

" your and good acceptance." And though the subject matter of these parables has been very well handled by other writers, yet the great compass which our author has taken in his explication of them, may render them as acceptable as any of those which have been already printed. He had confidered fome, if not most of the other parables; but they being less perfect and intire, the publication of them will be suspended, if not intirely omitted. The next piece which appeared in publick was, --- The Self-Deceiver plainly difcovered to himself, or the Serious Christian instructed in his Duty to God, to himself, and to his Neighbour. In some private Conferences between a Minister and his Parishioner. This book was published in the year 1731, and, as the preface to it observes, it must be lamented that the publick has been so long deprived, by uncommon accidents, of the use of it, the pious author having finished it for publication fome time before his death, which, according to the account already given of it, happened above thirty years ago. This book is a large octavo, of about five shillings price. It fully and excellently proves, that there is fuch a thing as felf-deceit, and shews what it is, or wherein it confifts; that 'tis the only thing that destroys us; that all men are subject to it; whence this inclination to it ariseth, and the ways which men take to acaccomplish it, viz. inconsideration, want of felf-examination, unreasonable prejudices, undue comparisons, judging ourselves by others opinion

opinion of us, over-rating outward acts of religion, over-valuing conformity to human laws, a misplaced or mistaken zeal, vain confidence of long life, vain trust in God's mercy, a false opinion that God's laws are impracticable, and a taking prosperity for a fign of grace. It likewise shews us the unreasonableness of felf-deceit, and how, and by what figns, it may be discovered. The next was . a little piece; intitled, Advice to Masters of Families, founded upon this text of Fosh. xxiv. 15.—As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. A subject truly worthy of this good man's per, and so judiciously handled, as to convince any reasonable christian of the great importance and necessity of family religion, and a good example in mafters of families to their children, and fervants, and the wickedness and bad consequences of the contrary. A book of this kind could never appear at a more proper feafon, than now, when the great enemy of our falvation feems to have fummon'd together the whole poffe comitatus of hell to attack and ftorm our most holy religion on every fide, and to undermine the very foundations of every thing that is good. For, so much may be very justly afferted, when the christian religion is ridiculed as a fable, and a cheat, even by apprentices in the most publick places of refort; and when even moral virtue, or the religion of nature, which the advocates for deism have set up as a rival to christianity, and upon which they have bestowed so many fine slourishes and

encomiums, though with a very ill defign, is altogether as much exploded by fome of them, as 'tis in reality neglected by all the For we have been told in fo many words, and in publick print, that the moral virtues are the political off-spring, which flattery begot upon pride; that evil, as well moral as natural, is the folid basis, the life and fupport of all trades and employments without exception; that there we must look for the true origin of all arts and sciences; and that the moment evil ceases, the society must be spoiled, if not dissolved. For a proof of this, I refer the reader to the 37th, and the 428th pages of a late infamous book, intitled, The Fable of the Bees, or private Vices publick Benefits. If this fashionable, as well as mischievous rant goes on to poison the minds and principles of our youth, our lectures of duty, diligence, frugality, fociety, and inviolable integrity, our rebukes, and even punishments or corrections, will have but very little effect upon the behaviour of our children and fervants. The magistrate and the minister of God's word may, and, I hope in God, generally do, exert themselves to good purpose, as the duty of their place and station requires, in the cause of virtue, and in opposition to vice; but very little good is to be expected from them, where the affistance of the governors of private families does not concur with their pious and necessary endeavours to encourage the one, and check the other. The opportunities which parents and masters

mafters have to observe the good and evil dispositions of their children and servants, and to throw in line upon line, and precept upon precept, are almost infinite; their exemplary piety and good behaviour may and ought to be daily and constant; and woe be to them that misbehave themselves in this great and important part of their duty! They that neglect to provide fuch food and raiment, as is necessary for their families, according to their rank and ability, or wilfully with-hold their fervants wages, are foon marked out as barbarous and icandalous tyrants and oppreffors; but, alas! what comparison is there betwixt such an offence as this, and the neglecting to give them, at all proper times, such instruction, such advice, fuch reproof, fuch restraint and discipline, and fuch a good and pious example, as our most holy religion, and the experience of every day, have required at their hands? Their blood, their fouls, if they perish thro' his negligence, and much more, if they perish through their wickedness, will certainly be required at their hands. And let me ask any man in his right fenfes, whether he thinks himself most likely to preserve what he is already possessed of, and to add to it by the help of a religious, fober, honest, and well ordered number of children, fervants, or other domesticks, or by that of these who are profane, wicked, and disorderly? Neither, on the other hand, must we neglect to confider that reward which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give at the laft

# AUTHOR'S LIFE, &c. xliii

last day to all those who have trained up those committed to their care, in the way that they ought to walk in. For if they that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever, what shall be the reward of those who preserve the innocence of them whom the good providence of God hath been pleased to place under their influence and inspection? In a word, the greatest good we can expect to do, is upon young people; and God of his infinite mercy make us duly fenfible of our duty, with regard to our children and fervants, and as willing to practice it, with a ferious and conscientious exactness!-The enfuing volume of our author's works confifts of a large discourse; intitled, The great work of a christian; or the necessity and method of working out his salvation, divided into feveral chapters; and a large and most excellent discourse of communicating often in the holy facrament of the Lord's supper, which he defigned should be printed toge-To these are added, A sermon on John xvi. 33. on Psal. cxii. 7. on Luke vi. 25. on Prov. xvi. 32. on Pet. ii. 19. and on 2 Chron. xv. 15. Together, with an Exposition on the Church Catechism, which, as I have faid before, were prepared for the press by our author's own hand. The last of these was written and finished in the last year of his life, with great care and exactness, and afterwards left to the confideration of some of his brethren of the clergy, whether it should fee the light; and was returned with

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the universal approbation of those that perused it. I have not any thing more to add, but my hearty prayers to God, that the reader may reap the benefit from the labours of this good man, which I am sure he designed and desired. The following verses were written by a relation of our author.

In Obitum Viri admodum Reverendi CLEMENTIS ELLISII.

Nos consanguineos, conjunctos sanguine Christi, Nec varii casus, nec mors divellere possit. O Amor! ardentem rapias ad sidera mentem, Inserat ista suos animis cælestibus ignes.

E. F.

#### THE

# Scripture Catechist;

OR, THE

Whole Religion of a CHRISTIAN.

Being a Full EXPLANATION of the

# CHURCH CATECHISM.

Question.

 $W^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{h}}$ 

HAT is your name?
Answer. N. or M.

Q. Which is this, your christian name, or your syr-name?

A. It is my christian name.

O. Why do you call it your christian name?

A. Because it was given me when I first engaged myself to be a christian.

Q. Why do you call your other name your fyrname?

A. Because I had it from my father or syre, and

it is the name of our family.

S. This first question and answer concerning your name contain no part of the catechism or instruction which you now come to learn. There is none of you, I suppose, so ignorant, but you knew both your christian name and syrname before you came hither. Nevertheless you are asked no impertinent or idle question, when you are asked, What is your name; as I shall, I hope, make you better understand hereafter. Now it shall suffice to tell you, it is as the door or gate to an house, thro' which you are led into your catechism, making the way open to the next question and answer concerning your baptism, and the inestimable benefits thereof.

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By your natural birth you are one of mankind, you are by nature the child of a man, of the same kind and nature with your natural parents; and therefore you have the name of your father, and his family, as soon as you are born. And hence I shall take occasion to teach you a few things, whereof you ought not to be ignorant, and which if you do not well consider, there is little hope that you will ever be a good christian. They shall be but sew, and such as I conceive it as easy, as it is indeed seasonable for you now to learn; and which being learned will much help you the better to understand, and prepare you the more willingly to receive the instructions

which are given you in this catechism.

The first of them is this: If you be a man, the child of a man, and a member of mankind by nature and birth, then must it needs be your natural duty to behave yourfelf in all things as it becometh a man to do, or according to your kind, and not to live like a brute creature or beaft, as too many now do, who feem to have forgotten, or not at all to confider the difference which there is between the natures and kinds of men and beafts. When any thing is, or acts, contrary to, or not after its own nature or kind, but degenerateth or grows out of kind, it is little fet by, but difregarded as a thing useless and good for nothing. And again, the more any thing improves, and the more perfect it grows in its kind, the better it is, and justly esteemed of so much the greater value.

When first God created all things, he made them not all of one kind or nature; but he made the plants and trees, the fish and fowl, and every living thing after bis kind, Gen. i. 11, &c. Every tree is known by his own fruit; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes, Luke vi. 24. Whilst any creature serveth well for such uses as God hath fitted and designed it for by the nature which he hath given it, so long it is good: So,

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whilst men and women behave themselves according to the nature of mankind, and live according to the law of nature, and as by those noble faculties which belong to human nature they are fitted to live, fo long are they good men and women, approved of God, and beneficial to one another. But if men live not according to their nature, they deferve not to be reckoned any longer among men, nor to be used as men, but as corrupt trees, to be cut down, and cast into the fire. Let us all remember this, let us shew ourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye trangressors! Let us, I say, remember, that we were made men, and not beafts; let us therefore for fhame learn again to live like men, and not like brute creatures. Man that is in bonour, and understandeth not, is like the beafts that perish, Pfal. xlix. 20. God made him little lower than the angels, he crowned him with glory and bonour. He made him have dominion over the work of his hands, and put all things under bis feet, Pfal. viii. 5, 6. For shame then, let us labour to keep up the dignity of our human nature, and fee to it, that we do nothing unworthy of men.

Secondly, You are to know, that man is by nature a reasonable creature. He hath not only those lower faculties and powers of receiving bodily nourishment, and growing thereby unto a greater bulk, and more fruitfulness, as plants and trees have according to their feveral kinds; or of perceiving and difcerning bodily things by fense, and of longing after, or desiring them by a sensitive appetite, and of moving towards them, that he may enjoy them, and the like, as beafts have; but he hath a natural power or faculty of understanding, considering, arguing, judging, refolving, not only of things present, but of those past and to come; not only of things bodily and visible, but of things spiritual and invisible. It is natural to man to defire to be as happy as it is posfible for him to be, both now and for ever; and to think with himself what it is wherein he may be so

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happy;

happy; and if he can find such a thing, then to consider, what are the likeliest means to bring him to the enjoyment of that, wherein his happiness must consist. He therefore that liveth only according to sense, or brutish appetite, and mindeth nothing but what pleaseth him best at present, liveth not according to human nature, or as it is natural for a man to live; and therefore he liveth not as a man, but as a beast, nor is he worthy of the name of a man; consider this well, I beseech you, that nothing can be more unnatural to man, who by the use of his reason, if in any thing, must shew himself to be of a distinct kind and nature from other inferior creatures, than not to govern himself by reason.

Thirdly, The right use of reason is thereby to attain unto useful knowledge: That the foul be without knowledge, is not good, Prov. xix. 9. What's any one the better for having eyes in his head, if he will always wink hard, and fee nothing? Suppose you have the faculty or power of understanding and reasoning in a higher measure than most men have, so that you are more capable of being taught, and of attaining to the true knowledge of things than they are; yet, if you never apply yourfelf to learn, but fleep, and play away your time, and will not be at the pains of thinking and confidering, and using all the means and helps of attaining to the true knowledge of things, what are you the better for the faculty of understanding, than those creatures who want it? You cannot live like a man, or according to human nature, fo long as you know not what becometh you as a man, and what by his nature a man is fitted for, and ought to exercise himself in. Nothing can be more unnatural to a rational creature. fuch as man is, than to be always ignorant of those things, which to know is of greatest concernment to him. Let us therefore, if we desire to be men indeed, use all possible diligence to grow in knowledge, as we grow in years. If we do not fo, but will reft

rest contentedly ignorant, rather than not be allowed to live in idleness and vanity; when we call ourselves men, we do but call ourselves children or They that are without understanding or knowledge, are called also the brutish among the penple, Pfal. xciv. 8. Let us not be therefore like the borse and mule, which have no understanding, Pfal. xxxii. o. Neither like those blind idols, which have eyes, and see not. And yet, after all, what better shall we be for seeing or knowing, if we see and know only vain things, and fuch as profit us not, but rather hinder our progress in useful and profitable knowledge? Truly such knowledge as this makes us more children than we were when we were born, and will keep us childish still, and hinder us from ever being men, who are to put away from them childiff

things. Therefore.

Fourthly, To live like a man, and agreeably to our rational nature, is to employ our reason in searching out of those things which are most worthy of our pains, and will do us most good. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, Prov. xx. 27. And he hath not fet up that light within us only to give us light to play by, or to fee and difcern the things which are of least worth; but that every man may thereby know himself, what kind of creature he is, and how capable he is of being happy, and what it is that will make him fo, and what he is to contribute towards his own happiness; in subose power it is to make him happy or miferable, on whom he hath his dependence for all that he either hath or can hope for, and on what conditions he will bestow upon him the happiness, which he cannot but naturally desire. As God hath fet up the natural light of leafon within us to fee by; fo hath he ipread the great book of the world wide open before us, that we may fee and consider therein the wondrous works of God, and thereby difcern his wisdom, power and goodness; that by the things which are made, and are visible

to our eyes, we may discover the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. Every thing within us and without us, about and above us, teach us, that this world of creatures could no more be what we perceive them to be, without an omnipotent, wife and good Maker, Preserver and Orderer, than a stately and well-contrived house can be without a skilful builder. Now he that built all things, is God, Heb. iii. 4. We live not then as men and reasonable creatures, unless we live religiously, in the most humble adoration and worship, in the fear and reverence, in the love and obedience of God, the Fountain of our being, and therefore also of all our happiness. If we do not absolutely refign ourselves to his good will and pleasure, if we obey not readily whatever commands he giveth. or fubmit not chearfully to whatfoever he layeth upon us, we do not as becometh our nature. live irreligiously, not regarding the duty we owe unto God, is to act against our nature, to make no good use of our reason, and to be no better than brute beafts.

Fifthly, As you are a man, and should make a good use of your reason and understanding; so the proper use of it is, to direct you how to chuse wisely for yourself, and stedfastly to resolve by all proper means to purfue that which your reason judgeth best in order to your happiness. Knowledge, though it be of the best things, if you content yourfelf with it alone, will profit you nothing. It is not therefore a thing to be defired for itself alone, but to this end, that you may be directed by it to live as becometh a man. What you have learned to know, you must also well consider; and comparing one thing with another, to find out what is best, you must, as your reason directs you, chuse that, and prefer it before all other things, following after it with all your might. It is the will in man, that fets him on work, and commands him in all his

his actions, as he is a man; and his reason is given him to direct his will how to command aright.

If therefore we will shew ourselves to be men indeed, we must be sure not to chuse rashly, or at a venture blindly; nor resolutely to six upon any thing as the main end or business of our life, but upon sufficient deliberation, and by the directions of our reason.

To will, and chuse, and pursue that only, which we find to be most easy to us, or most pleasant to our sless, or what our appetites most crave, or what to our bodily senses is most delightful, is not to chuse like men, but like beasts. If we will chuse like men, we must chuse what we are rationally persuaded will prove most useful and profitable, and is most

likely to make us for ever happy.

Let me therefore befeech you (as ever you would be happy) to submit yourselves to your teachers and instructors, lest by an ill education your reason be fuffered to lie unawaked and unimproved; and having by that means got an habit of doing foolifhly, you never come to have the right use of your reafon, or grow impatient of being directed by it, and fo you continue all your days like the beafts which perish. Again, I beg you to take heed, that you be not over-ruled in your choice by the common customs and vain fashions of brutish people. You will find almost in all places you come into, that this fort of people are the most you shall meet with. Now your reason, which should be always your director, will tell you, if you confult it, that you ought to do always according to the nature of man; and tho' others will not do fo, but be beafts instead of men, it may be your duty to pity them, and to pray for them, and to do whatever you can to make them fenfible how much they are funk below the dignity of their nature; yet ought you not to imitate them, nor to be a beast yourself for the fake of fuch beaftly company. Is it a good reason for you

to do foolishly, because it is in fashion with fools to do so? You must, if you will be a man, let your reafon govern your affections, curb your passions, restrain your appetite, over-rule your desires and designs, and so command your whole behaviour, that if you had no written law given you, you might be a law unto yourself, doing by nature the things contained in the law, having the work of the law written in your bearts, as St. Paul written

of the Gentiles, Rom. ii. 14, 15.

Sixthly, Seeing you are by nature a man, even as others also are, and seeing they are all of them men, even as you are; and all are come of the same common parents, 'tis plain that all are by nature brethren and fisters. And therefore, as a man, you are by nature no better than other men are; but they are all, how mean or low soever their present condition may be, as good men as you, so long as they live as much according to the nature of man as you do. There is not any thing that makes one a better man or woman than another, but this only, that he behaves himself more suitable to his human and rational nature, than others do. You will therefore much forget yourfelf, and what you are by nature, if you grow proud and lordly, scorning, despising, or setting at nought the meanest of men, as though they were your flaves, and not your brethren. It will always become you to be very humble and meek towards all men, having a brotherly kindness for them, loving, helping, befriending and ferving them, as there shall be occafion and opportunity. For how great a disparity foever there may be in some respects, as one may be in power and authority, and others in fubjection and under command, some may be learned and others ignorant; fome may be ennobled with honours and dignities, and others hardly fo much as taken notice of in the world; some may be in a poor and low condition, and on that account as little

little efteemed; and fome very rich, and for that flatter'd and cringed to, almost by every body; yet as we are men and women, we are all of one kindred and brotherhood, and members of one fociety: and however our families may be now diffinguished. and one may foolishly boast himself to be of a better house and nobler family than others, and highly value himself above the rate of other men on that score, as one of their betters; yet are we in truth all made of the same kind of earth, and all of the same great family of mankind, being all the children of the fame common parents, Adam and Eve, and that. too, after they were become finners, and degenerate. and had their blood tainted, and were brought into flavery by the devil, as you will be taught anon. A proud man therefore, a felfish person, a churlish and unkind one, that dispifeth and scorneth others. as though they were fet too far below him, for him to look upon, or own as brethren and fifters: and he that regards not the common welfare of mankind, but takes care of himself only; and he that envies the good of others, and maliciously endeavours to lessen it; he that is unkind, unmerciful, and churlish to any one, is one of the most unnatural creatures that walk upon the earth. God bath made of one blood, or kindred, all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, Acts xvii. 26. We are then all equals by nature, and should be much ashamed to forget it. And yet so do all they, that, how high foever they fland in the world, carry themselves proudly, insolently, and after a scornful manner towards the lowest; who expect so much respect and veneration from their poor neighbours and servants, that if they come but near them, or use not all the ceremony of reverence even to a fort of idolatry, all their treatment shall be furly looks, difdainful language, and an usage fit for slaves only. How do all fuch creatures as these strip themselves of their humanity, and turn inhuman monfters?

Lastly, As we are men, so are we mortal creatures, and must die. Man indeed was not at first made mortal, but designed and fitted for a blessed immortality: How he became subject to death, you will learn hereafter. Now we all know, that we must die as all men do, whatsoever our present state or quality is; whether we be rich or poor, high or low, wise or foolish, healthful or sickly, What man is be that shall not see death? And shall be deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Psal. lxxxix. 48. Every one seeth, that wise men die, likewise the soolish and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth for others, Psal. xlix. 10. And when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall

not descend after bim, ver. 7.

Tho' you, to whom I now more especially speak, be young, and think little, or not at all, of dying, or look upon death as upon a thing a great way off, and far from you; yet know for certain, that as fure as you were born, and are now alive, fo fure it is that you shall die, and you know not how soon, when, where, nor how. It may be you may die before you be many days older, and before you have learnt how to live as it becomes you. As foon as we were born, we began to draw to our end, Wifd. v. 13. And death will not be long in coming, Eccl. xiv. 12. It becomes us then, as we are men, to think well, whither we shall go when we die, and what our condition shall be after death, and to make the best use that we can of reason to provide against the worst that may befal us. We naturally defire to live, and that for ever; yet none of us are willing to live in misery for ever. As we know, that, notwithstanding all our defires of life, we must die; so, tho' we know not naturally what remains for us after death, yet are we told, and good reasons are given why we should believe it, that we shall live for ever, either miserable or happy. Now certainly we live not as men according to reason, if in a matter of such concernconcernment as is eternal misery, or eternal happiness, we make not use of the best light we can get, and govern not ourselves by the most probable reasons we can meet with, so that we may escape

misery, and enjoy life after death.

Seeing then we know not certainly of ourselves what will be hereafter, and yet with as much evidence of truth as fuch a thing as life after death can be made evident unto us, are put in hope of it, we must needs act very foolishly, and not according to reason, if we live not so, as we are told they must do, who shall attain to that blessed life. Let us not be fo filly as to fall much in love with any thing of this world, feeing nothing in this world can do us good any longer than we live in this world. and that will not be long. Nothing in this world can keep off death, and after death we can have no more use off it, how highly soever we now value it. Let us especially beware, lest our excessive fondness for worldly things make us forgetful of dying, and fo we be furprized and caught by death, ere we be ready for a better life; or be tempted to any fin, which will make death more terrible to us; for the fling of death is fin, I Cor. xv. Make hafte therefore (as it becomes us all) to learn the art of living well, that so you may be able manfully to look death in the face. It is no hurt at all that death can do unto a good man; it will but fend him thither. where he shall live for ever, and be for ever blessed.

These are the things whereof your syrname hath prompted me to mind you: I will now add no more. By nature you are one of mankind, and ought to live according to your kind. To live as a man according to your kind, you must be govern'd by your reason. The right use of reason is to attain thereby to useful knowledge. The most useful and necessary knowledge is the knowledge of God, your duty to him, and dependence on him. It is the business of reason to direct your will in the choice

of the best things you know of, and to bring you to a sull resolution to sollow after them. As you are a man, you are a member of mankind, and should not be proud and injurious, or unmercisul; but humble, courteous, loving, kind, and mercisul to all men, and to seek the publick welfare. And as a man you are also mortal, and not to dote on things which you must shortly lose, but to make to yourself as sure as you can a blessed eternity.

Q. Tou have told me what your christian name is: I now ask you, Who gave &c.

A. My Godfathers, &c.

Q. What did your Godfathers, &c.

A. They did promife, &c. Q. Dost thou not think, &c. A. Yes verily, &c.

§. You are here put in mind of many things wherein it is very necessary you should be well instructed; but because you cannot thoroughly understand these things, before you have been instructed in the chief articles of the christian faith, and in the commandments of God, I shall defer the suller explication of them, till we come to the doctrine of the two sacraments. At present I desire you to take notice of these things:

First, That as by your natural birth you are men, and ought (as you have been taught) to live according to human nature; so, to be christians, you must have a new and spiritual birth, or regeneration; you must be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, before you can enter into the kingdom of beaven,

Joh. iii. 5.

Secondly, That when you are christians, you do not cease to be men, but are as much as ever obliged to live according to the laws of human nature. One may be a man, and no christian; but he cannot be a christian, and no man. By being christians you become new men, and have the laws of nature taught

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you more perfectly, and are bound to observe some new laws, which were given by Christ. So that christianity tends to the perfecting of your human nature, and both encourageth you to live good lives, and teacheth you by what means you may certainly be made as happy as men can be, both now on earth, and hereafter in heaven.

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Thirdly, That man was created upright, and in a state of innocence, and could not hope for the continuance of God's favour and bleffing on any other terms, than of keeping the law of innocence. This God had enabled him to do, and this, on pain of losing his favour, he required of him. But man soon broke this law, and fell thereby into a state of sin, and by fin, of weakness; so that as he had not kept, so neither now could be keep the law of innocence, or finless obedience; nor could he find reafon to expect any thing but punishment, whatfoever it should be that it should please God to lay upon him. Now by fin the nature of man is corrupted, and all his noble faculties deprayed and weak. He knows God, and himself, and his natural duty to God very imperfectly, and he hath a difliking of things that he knows, and his affections carry him unto things hurtful to him, and reason is either laid asleep, and considers it not, or cannot be hearkened to when it directs aright.

Fourthly, That it pleased our gracious God in a wonder of mercy to suspend his wrath, and to propound unto mankind a new way, whereby he might come out of this wretched and desperate state of sin, into a state of grace and favour. And this he did by establishing a covenant betwixt himself and all mankind, in and through Jesus Christ, yielding and granting unto all, that whosoever would sincerely enter into this covenant, and set their hearts to keep it, should yet find mercy with him, although they could not be innocent and without sin. Of this covenant baptism is appointed by Christ to be

the fign and feal both on God's part and ours. God hereby affuring us of all that in this covenant he promifeth; and we fignifying our unfeigned resolution to perform whatever is required of us. What both these are, you are taught here in a few words.

I. What God in this covenant affures us of, and that is, of these three things: 1st, That we, who are by nature but members of mankind at best, and what's worse, members of the first and sinful Adam. are now in baptism made the members of Christ the fecond Adam, who is without all fin, and fo are received again into favour for his fake, as tho' we had 2dly, That we, who in the state of never offended. corrupt nature are the children of wrath, and of the devil, are by entering into this covenant adopted the children of God, taken care of in his family the church, and enjoy all the ministeries of the Spirit of Holiness, and all the means of grace and glory. And, 3dly, We, who for fin deferve nothing but the everlasting torments of hell-fire, are made heirs of the kingdom, a fure title to that eternal inheritance being given us, which we can never lose but by our wilful violation of this gracious covenant. These are undeniable inestimable benefits, and as much as any man can wish for, and give us the greatest encouragement in the world to be good christians.

2. What things God requires of us, what we promise and vow, and engage ourselves to perform, you are here also taught. And these things if we do not, we are no sincere christians, neither can we lay claim to the benefits but now mentioned. That then which you promised, is briefly this: 1st, To renounce the devil, and all his works; not to imitate that evil spirit in sin, nor to yield to any of his temptations; to renounce also the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, that is, all the wickedness practised in the world, and whatever in the world the devil or his wicked agents make use of, either to allure, or to affright us into any sin. All these things,

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I fay, we renounce thus far, as neither to love or fear them so much as to be prevailed upon by them to do wickedly; and, lastly, we absolutely renounce being led or ruled by the finful lufts of the flesh, or of our own carnal hearts; because these are not only offensive to God, but they give all advantages to the tempter, and fet an edge on all his temptations. adly, You promise to believe all the articles of the christian faith, that is, all those principal points of Christ's doctrine, which are the necessary foundation of a christian life, or, without the belief of which, you cannot behave yourfelf as a good chri-3dly, You also promise to keep God's boly Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life. That is, you promise an universal obedience to the whole will of God, howfoever it shall be revealed or made known unto you; and that you will persevere in this obedience, notwithstanding any temptation to the contrary, as long as you live. Now, if you do not perform, and to the utmost of your power make good whatfoever you here promife, the benefits of the christian covenant do not belong unto you.

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Fifthly, You are here taught, what is the best course you can take to make good your part of this covenant. And it is this: 1st, You must own your engagement, and the obligation that lieth upon you by the promise and vow which your godfathers and godmothers made in your name, and that most serioully, and in good earnest. 2dly, You must firmly resolve to perform what was promised in your name, as tho' the promise had been understandingly and deliberately made by yourfelf. Yet, 3dly, You must acknowledge and confess your own impotence, and disability of yourself to perform what was promised, and resolve no otherwise than as one that trusts only to the help of God, thro' which alone you are able to do any thing that is good. 4thly, You must confess, that it is thro' Jesus Christ alone, and for his fake, that God hath been thus graciously pleased to admit you into this covenant with him, and so to put you (who for sin deserved nothing less than eternal damnation) into a state of grace, and a new way to eternal salvation. 5thly, You must be verily thankful to God for this his wonderful mercy, and satherly goodness, in sending Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, and by his gospel to call you into this state of salvation. 6thly, You must most humbly and fervently pray unto God for the help of his holy spirit, beseeching him never to be absent from you with his assisting grace, whereby you may be made both able and willing to make good your promise and yow, that so you may continue in this comfortable state of salvation to your dying day.

Q. Did you know when you were baptized what was

then promised and vowed in your name?

A. No, indeed I did not; for I was then a very infant, and knew not so much as that I was born,

or that I was any thing at all.

You fay very truly, we are all born infants; and when we are born, we are ignorant of all things, and we can no more know any thing, than we can speak or go. But nevertheless, we were born to be in time men and women, if it please God that we shall live fo long. Moreover, we are born with a natural power and faculty of learning and knowing, and may be taught to know, as well as we can be taught to speak and go. It becomes you then, as those who desire to be in time men and women, to hearken to instruction, to submit yourselves to be taught, that fo you may in good time attain to the knowledge of those things, without the knowledge of which you cannot live as men and women ought to do. Whilst you are infants, and are not come to have the use of your reason, God doth not expect it of you to know; but leaves you to be governed and disposed of by the reason of others;

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others; but as your reason ripeneth, and you grow thereby in any measure capable of good instruction, God expects it from you, that you should apply yourselves to learn the things which are of greatest necessity to be known by you. Let me beg of you therefore, that you will lose no time; but make all the haste you possibly cap, to learn as much as you are capable of being taught.

Q. What are you now come bither for?

A. I come to be catechised.

O. What is it to be catechised?

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of rs; A. To be catechifed is to be instructed or taught.

You do very well in coming hither to this end.

Q. What is it wherein you defire to be instructed?

A. I desire to be instructed in the christian religion, and to be taught the meaning of the covenant whereinto I was solemnly admitted in baptism.

The things which you defire to know, are altogether necessary to be known, and you cannot more eafily, more perfectly, or fooner be taught the knowledge of them, than by this familiar way of teaching, which we now call catechifing. It is a plain way of teaching, in words easy to be understood by every one that understands his mother tongue; and hereby it is best suited to the capacity of the learners. It is a short way of teaching, and loads not the memory, nor confounds the heads of young beginners with more things than are fimply necessary. It is the most certain way of teaching; for when one teacheth by fpeaking all himself in sermons, or any other discourses of that nature, at which the learner is a hearer only; the teacher after all his pains knows not whether his scholar hath learned any thing or

no, nor whether he did to much as take notice of

any thing that was spoken; but in this way of teach-

ing the learner being posed, and obliged to answer

to every question that is asked him, we may be as-

fured thereby what attention he hath given, and what he hath learned.

The usefulness of catechising will fully appear, if we consider these things which I shall now say of it.

I. What can it fignify to you, that you were follemnly entered into the covenant of grace, by the means of others speaking in your name, if you yourself, when you come to years of discretion, either disregard, or will not in person ratify and confirm what was by them promised and vowed by you? And how shall you be able to ratify and confirm it, if you understand it not? And how can you understand it, if you be not catechised and instructed in the meaning of it? Look then, how necessary it is, that you should personally own your obligation to keep your baptismal vow and covenant; so needful is it for you to be well catechised and instructed therein.

2. To communicate in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a necessary christian duty, and one of the seals of the covenant of grace, whereof Christ hath said, This is the New Testament in my blood, I Cor. xi. 25. To be worthy communicants hereof, we must, every time that we approach to the Lord's table, to have the blessing of that covenant new sealed unto us by God, examine ourselves how we perform our part of the covenant in repentance, saith, and obedience. But how can we possibly do this, if we be not well catechised or instructed?

3. Catechifing is very needful for our better profiting by the hearing of fermons, and reading of books written for our farther instruction in our christian faith and duty. For the principles of religion being well learned, we can by them examine and try what we hear or read. And every fermon being but a farther improvement, explanation, confirmation and application of some point or other of our christian faith and duty, which formerly we have been more

learning,

more briefly taught, helps mightily to confirm us therein. It brings us to a more full and distinct understanding of the things which we have been more fummarily taught, and fets them home upon our affections, and sheweth us of what use they are to us for our direction, comfort or encouragement in any case wherein we find ourselves. But, alas! it is a very difmal thing to confider, what fad work they ufually make with fermons, who have not been by catechifing well prepared before-hand, mistaking almost every thing they hear, and little understanding on what that which they hear is grounded, or how it agrees with the principles of christianity. Their ears are filled with noise, and their affections a little moved with the earnestness or tone of the expresfions; for this they commend the preacher, and with this they deceive themselves into an opinion that they are good christians.

4. Catechifing in the principles of christian religion is the best way to keep men found in the faith, and holy in life and conversation. We read of a form of doctrine, Rom. vi. 17. And of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, Heb. vi. 1, 2. And again, of a form of found words, 2 Tim. i. 13. Which the apostle Paul there chargeth Timothy to hold fast. We are commanded not to believe every (pirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God; and for a very good reason there given, because many false prophets are gone out into the world, I Joh. iv. I. St. Paul befeecheth the Romans to mark them which caused divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which they bad learned, telling them, that such persons serve not the Lord Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Some will come with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, 2 Thest. ii. 10. Some, I say, that have a form of godliness, and so the easi-lier creep into houses, and lead captive filly women, laden with fins, led away with divers lusts; ever

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learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7. Days of strong temptations, and grievous perfecutions, may arise for the name of Christ, or the doctrines and practices of christianity, such as christians in all ages of the church have had experience of. Now how is it possible either to continue stedsast in the truth of the gospel, or to withstand the manifold temptations to sin and wickedness, unless we be first well catechised in the

truths which Christ hath taught us?

6. Having shewn you how necessary a thing it is to be well catechifed and instructed, I shall now earnestly beseech all parents, and masters or mistresses of families, both to catechise their children at home, and also to send them to the church to give an account of what they have learned, and to be farther instructed as there shall be need of it. If you do not take care of this, it is much more your fault than theirs, and you will never be able to excuse yourselves to God for this neglect of your duty. They that are yet ignorant, cannot, whilft they are so, understand the worth and necessity of the things which they should learn, and no wonder if they defire not what they know not, or if they will not be at much pains to learn the things whereof they have no desire. But parents and governors of families having children and fervants in their families, of whom they have the charge and care committed to them by God, are very unfit for fuch relations, if either they know not how to instruct them themselves, or take no care to have them instructed by others in the principles of that religion wherein alone they can hope to be faved. Abraham the father of the faithful was approved of by God, and highly commended for this, that he took care to have his family religious. I know him (faith God) that he will command bis children and his boushold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19.

O my dear brethren, as you love your children, which it feems a very hard thing for parents, even for evil parents, not to do; as you defire and wish their happiness, which you feem every one in his own way to labour for; nay, as you love yourselves, and would not have the heavy load of your childrens fins to be laid on your backs, who have more of your own than you are able yourselves alone to bear; be fure to catechife them yourselves, and to send them to be still better instructed by others. The likelieft way to have them good, and to be for ever happy in a better world, is to have them taught to do good before they have learned to do evil, and to give God the possession of their hearts as early as you can, that the devil may never enter into them, turn them into fwine, and then drown them in perdition. Train up therefore the child in the way he should go, and he will not depart from it when he is old; Prov. xxii. 6. that is the hopefullest way can be taken to keep him in it. Take care that (as Timothy was taught to do) they may from their childhood know the scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. St. Paul's command to parents is, that they bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4. The charge which God gave his people of old to this purpose is very remarkable. These words (faith he) which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt speak of them when thou sittest in thine bouse, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, Deut. vi. 6, &c. Or as it is, Pfal. Ixxviii. 5. He established a testimony in facob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children who should be born, who should arise, and declare them to their children: That they might fet their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep bis commandments

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mandments; and might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God. There are (it may be scared) in all places too many parents who are of this untoward and ungodly temper, a very stubborn and rebellious fort of people, who regard not the laws either of God or man, by both which they stand bound to take care of their children and servants christian education. I hope you will be careful that not many fuch may be found among you. You pretend that you yourselves are christians; yet you can hardly, by any thing that I can think of, more shamefully betray your hypocrify and diffimulation, or more openly proclaim yourselves to be lyars, and to have nothing at all of christianity, or of the fear of God in you,

than by the neglect of this great duty.

Can they have any thing of the fear and love of God in them, who willingly fuffer their children and fervants, whom he hath commanded them to teach in his laws, to live in ignorance of him, and of their duty to him? Can they have any love for their children and fervants, any care of their eternal welfare and happiness, who, whatever other fondness they shew towards them, can see them run on blindly in the way to eternal misery, and will not be at any pains to teach them the way of falvation? Can they have any care for their own fouls, or any regard of the account they must once be called to give of their stewardship; nay, any sense of their credit and reputation among men, fo long as they continue negligent herein, and exercise not all the authority God hath given them over their children, as over their peculiar charge committed to their trust, to bring them to the knowledge and fear of God, and to prepare them for the inheritance laid up for them in heaven?

This care God hath made your indispensable duty, which if you do not faithfully discharge, you must answer

answer for all the sins of those with whose education you are intrusted. You seemed to be in some measure sensible of this, and to acknowledge it, when you dedicated your children to the worship and service of the ever-blessed Trinity in the Holy Sacrament of baptism; and not only so, but procured others to engage themselves to assist you in their christian education, to see them taught what a solemn vow, promise, and profession they had made; and to provide that they might learn all things which a christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; even till they understood their faith and duty so well, as that they might in their own persons openly make profession of them before the bishop and the church, or congregation assembled with him.

All this confidered, what a shameless and false-hearted fort of people must they confess themselves to be, who take no care of this at all afterwards, yea, who will by no arguments be persuaded to take this care of their childrens pious education? If there be any such among you, I must here deal plainly with you, and let you know, that you are the most cruel and inhuman creatures in the world; neither can any one rationally think, that you entered into the state of marriage for any thing but either to enlarge your worldly estate, or to satisfy your brutish lusts. You beget and bear children, and when you have them, you take the ready course to prevent their ever being good, and to leave them an easy

And now let me tell you, young people, whose unhappiness it is to have such careless parents or masters, that so much the more care should you take of yourselves; and if you do not freely offer yourselves to be catechised, you are your own great enemies. Some things let me here tell you both for your direction and encouragement.

First, If you would profit by being catechised, you must come to it with a willing mind, and a great desire

to learn. What will all the teaching in the world fignify to one who hath no mind to be taught? Things unwillingly learned are usually almost as foon forgot as learned. Hearken therefore to wife king Solomon's advice: Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears unto the words of knowledge, Prov. xxiii. 12. Grudge not any pains or cost to get knowledge and wisdom. Buy the truth, and sell it not, also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding, Prov. xxiii. 23. You have all the encouragement that can be to hope that you labour not in vain; for wisdom offers herfelf freely to every one that will feek for her, and earnestly invites you to feek her, that you may find her. She crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates, in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools bate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my (pirit unto you, Prov. i. 20, &c. Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding beart, Prov. viii. 4, &c. My words spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you of excellent things, of righteous things, all truth, and plain to bim that understandeth. You see, all that have the nature of men, not one excepted, are invited to learn; and if they have not a mind to live and die very fools, may be taught the best and most necessary things.

Secondly, To move you to learn, and to neglect no means of knowledge, let me desire you to consider, that they are no indifferent or trisling matters that are commended to your learning, but of greatest moment and weight, by the ignorance of which you will be great losers, and by the knowledge of them as great gainers. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding;

for the merchandise of her is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto ber. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and bonour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her, Prov. iii. 13, &c. Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it. Prov. xvi. 22. Hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, refuse it not. Blessed is the man that beareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain the favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own foul; all they that bate me, love death, Prov. viii. 32, &c. Therefore take fast bold of instruction, let her not go, keep her: for she is thy life, Prov. iv. 13. He is in the way of life, that keepeth instruction, Prov. x. 17. But be that refuseth instruction, despiseth his own soul, Prov. XV. 32.

Thirdly, Tho' you are, for this reason, to spare neither pains nor cost for instruction, yet you must beware how you trust to the skill and knowledge of any teacher, or to any endeavours of your own. You must pray fervently to the wife God, and humbly beg his bleffing on both teacher and learner. Pray heartily, I fay, that God would give you an humble, meek, and teachable mind, that you may with meekness receive the ingrafted word, which is able to fave your fouls, Jam. i. 21. The meek will be. teach bis way, Pfal. xxv. 9. That he would work in you the love of the truth, and a full resolution to do God's will, when it is made known unto you. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of men or of God, Joh. vii. 17. That he would open your eyes to see, and your hearts

to understand. If thou crieft after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treafure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God: for the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and under-

standing, Prov. ii. 3, &c.

Fourthly, That the instruction which is given you may not be lost upon you, be fure that now especially, in the days of your youth, you do all that you can to keep yourselves out of ill company. You will very probably, in this loofe age wherein we live, meet with many of them who glory and pride themfelves in the corrupting of youth. These will infinuate and wind themselves into your company, into your good opinion and affections; and making a mock of all religion, and laughing at all who pretend unto it, will fet their wits on work to bring you out of love with it, will shame you, if possible, out of all thoughts of learning any thing that is good. Ceafe therefore to bear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge, Prov. xix. 27. Forfake the foolish, and live, and go in the way of understanding, Prov. ix. 6.

Fifthly, Make all the haste you can to learn now you are young. Make no delays. Drive not off a thing so altogether necessary to a time whereof you have no assurance. Do the duty of youth before you grow old. When should you learn how to live, but now that you are but beginning to live? Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, Eccl. xii. 2. That thou mayest hereafter be able to say, as good Obadiah did, I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. And with the Psalmist, O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, Psal. lxxi. 17. He asks the question, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways? And thus he answers it too, By taking heed thereto according to thy

word, Pfal. cxix. 9.

Therefore,

Therefore, though in malice you should be always children, yet be not children in understanding, but in understanding be ye men, I Cor. xiv. 20. God our Saviour will have all men to be faved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, I Tim. ii. 3. or to be faved by coming to the knowledge of the truth. Therefore get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not, Prov. iv. 5. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding, ver. 7. Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. iii. 18. This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, Joh. xvii. 3. Be ye then of St. Paul's mind, Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. Phil. iii. 8.

You have faid you are come to be instructed in the christian religion, and in your baptismal vow, and the covenant of grace. This that you would learn is briefly taught you in that form of instruction which is called the Church Catechism; and I will do all that is in my power to make you understand it, being ready to teach you both publickly in the congregation, that others may be instructed too by hearing you catechised; and also more privately at home,

as I can have opportunity.

The catechism which you are to learn containeth in it these four things, wherein you ought to be very persect. 1st, Those truths which you are stedsastly to believe, all which are summarily comprehended in that which is commonly called the Apostle's Creed, or the Articles of the christian faith, or belief. 2dly, The laws and rules of holy living, to be observed and obeyed in our life and practice; a sum whereof we have in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments. 3dly, The things which are to be desired and prayed for, and the manner and order of praying; and these we are taught in that most excellent and comprehensive form of prayer, which is called

called the Lord's prayer. And, 4thly, The feals, pledges, and assurances which our blessed Saviour hath instituted, for the more firmly binding us to God, and assuring us of God's promise to us, called the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. And these you are taught in the doctrine of the sacraments. These then are the four things which you are instructed in this Catechism. And because the doctrines of faith, or things to be believed, are the soundation whereupon a christian life is to be built, and the building is not like to stand, if the soundation be not first surely laid, here it is that you must begin to learn. And therefore,

Rebcarse, &c.

A. I believe in God the Father, &c.

§. You have rehearfed unto me the articles of your belief, or of the christian faith, all which you promised, when you were baptized, that you would believe. And for your better understanding of this promise, it seems to me very needful to mind you of these things.

First, Thathere you begin (as you faid you desired)

to be instructed in the christian religion.

Secondly, That you understand well, what these two words (Christian and Religion) do signify; for tho' these be common words, which are much in every body's mouth; and many talk of them; yet I fear, they are in the heads and hearts of but sew in comparison; but sew, I say, seem to understand the sull import and meaning of them, and sewer yet are affected as they ought to be, with what they understand. That you may not be one of those who, tho' they can rehearse the articles of the christian faith, and affirm themselves to be of the christian religion, yet know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm;

Thirdly, You are to know, that by religion is meant such a sense and apprehension of the being and persection of God, as begets and cherisheth in us a reverence, and behaviour suitable to the notions we

have

have of him. As, 1st, We are verily persuaded in our minds, that there is a divine Being endued with all possible perfections, who is the Maker, Preserver, and Governor of all things, which he ordereth and disposeth of by his uncontroulable power, according to the rules of his unerring and infallible wifdom, and indefectible goodness. And hence, 2dly, We begin to have the most profound veneration of his divine majesty, the highest degree of love to him, as the Author and Fountain of our being and bleffedness, and confequently, the greatest care to serve him according to his will, the greatest fear lest we should offend or dishonour him in any thing, and a very comfortable hope to be made happy by him. Whofoever hath in him this fense and belief of a God, on whom he depends for all things, and makes it his chief business to honour and serve him according to his conception of him, is a religious man in his way, whatfoever it be; and whofoever is void of this fense of a God, or regardless of him, taking no care to do his duty towards him, is one of no religion, how much foever he may please himself with the talk of it.

Fourthly, Tho' every one that devoutly worshipeth God in his own way, and according to the notions he hath of God, may be called a religious perfon; yet fuch an one may not be of the true religion. For one may have a wrong sense of God, and a false opinion of his divine nature. He may get fuch notions, and entertain such thoughts of God, as are altogether unfuitable to him, and can by no means be reconciled to his perfections and attributes. Men may hereupon take those things to be duties to God, and parts of the worship and service they owe unto him, which are in truth most contrary to his nature and will, and abominable to him. Hence are there many false religions in the world, and you must take heed that you be not deceived into any of them. When any one is asked, Of what religion he is? It is not thereby intimated, that there be more true religions

religions than one, whereof every one is at his liberty to chuse for himself as he likes best; but that which would be known of him is. Whether or no he worship the only true God according to the way which he approveth of; Whether he be one of those fools called Atheifts, who worship no God at all, who either own no God, or wish there were no God to be worshipped, but count religion and the fear of God a vain and troublesome thing; or whether one of those admired wits of this age, who laugh at christianity, and the simplicity of their forefathers, for fuffering themselves to be gulled with a little priestcraft into the belief of a revealed religion, and a fenfeless conceit of moral good and evil. These are called Deifts or Theifts, which is only a fofter and less odious name for Atheists; and they verily worship (if any thing at all) they know not what for God. Either it is a God without providence, that neither made the world, nor careth what is done in it, or what shall become of it; or it is a thing as much subject to fate and necessity, as any creature can be; therefore it can make no laws, nor do any miracles; nor, if that be true, can't with any colour of reason, expect any duty from us, nor is it able to reward or punish us. What reason can any one have to love, ferve and honour that whereon he hath no dependence, and what hath fo little of perfection, that it can have neither will nor power to do us either good or hurt? Such is the Theist's God, and yet what it is they call fo, or where it is, or for what fuch an unprofitable and impotent thing should be either loved or feared, it baffles all these wits to tell Only it ferves them well enough fenfelefsly to talk of, and to hide their Atheism from the eyes of the fimple and less thinking, and to stand by in a corner, leaving them to fulfil their lufts, and to do wickedly.

But bleffed for ever be the true and living God, whom we ferve; that the devil by fin hath got much power over a great part of mankind, yet he is

not permitted thus to befot all men, nor the most of men so far, as that they should abandon all thoughts of God and religion. Most men are still of some religion or other, the too many of a false one. There are indeed as many false religions, as there are false faiths, and false ways of worship, and there are many such.

ist, Some do service unto them, which by nature are no Gods, Gal. iv. 8. Who change the truth of God into a lye, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, Rom. i. 25. And change the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things, ver. 23. Thus do the heathen people, and this is the grossest sort of idolatry.

2. Some worship one God, but under a very corrupt notion of him, and in a way very displeasing to him, and unworthy of him, as do the *Mahometans*, who believe and worship as that great impostor *Ma*-

bomet hath taught them.

3. Others pretend, indeed, to worship the one true and living God, even as God himfelf hath taught them. So do the Yews at this day, following, as they fay, Moses and the prophets, but disowning our Lord Jesus Christ, and his gospel; him they crucified and flew, tho' not only Moles and the prophets. but the one God, whom they pretend to worship, many ways bare witness of him. So also the Arrians and Socinians, which now abound too much among us, and the Quakers taught by them, tho' they pretend to the worship of the true God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, yet will they not own either Christ or the holy Ghost to be God, but disbelieve the doctrine of the Trinity. Which doctrine tho' the Papifts do own, yet hold they many doctrines, and are guilty of many practices very much to the dishonour of all three divine Persons.

Finally, He that believeth and worshippeth God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ hath taught us in his gospel, is o

the christian religion.

You are in the next place to know, that calling these the articles of the christian faith, you are not to understand by the word [faith] the act of believing, but the things which you are to believe; and fo the christian faith here signifieth the doctrine which Christ And by faying, you believe all the hath taught us. articles of the christian faith, you do not thereby exclude any thing that is written in the books of either the Old or New Testament; as tho' there were any things recorded therein which you may chuse whether you will believe to be true or no: All things that are told you in those books, you must believe to be as they are therein related, and fo, at least by an implicit faith, believe all things in the Scripture. You are bound to read them, and to endeavour by the best means you can make use of to understand what you read. And when you have done fo, tho' there be many things which you cannot understand, yet are you to believe that they are all truths, because they are written in the word of God, who cannot lye. You are bound, I fay, for that reason, to believe that they are true, tho' it be not absolutely necessary, that you should understand them.

The things absolutely necessary, to be believed, are indeed easy enough to be understood by one that hath a willing mind, and desirous of divine knowledge. And not only the things which are necessary, but also many other things, which it is not so absolutely necessary that we should know; and all these we are to believe with an explicite faith, because we understand them. Yet are not all these things, which are so plainly revealed to us, of equal weight; many of them are such, as, if we had never been told of them, we might have done our christian duty, and been saved. But some truths there are, whereof we cannot be safely ignorant, they being such, that without a right understanding and a firm belief of them,

we can never do our christian duty, nor live the lives of christians. Such are the articles of your christian faith, the first principles of the oracles of God, which it is a very shame for them, who have lived a considerable part of their time, where the gospel is preached, not to know, or to stand in need of being taught them again, Heb. v. 12. The principles of the doctrine of Christ are called the foundation whereon a christian life is to be built, Heb. vi. 1.

Laftly, When you fay, I believe; by believing, no more is meant than this, that for good reasons, you are verily persuaded in your mind, that these are divine truths; and that you fee no cause at all to suspect or doubt that they are false. They are the things which, as St. Luke fays to Theophilus, are furely believed among us, Luke i. 1. Wherein Theophilus, to whom he writes, had been already instructed, or catechifed, as to the fense and meaning of them; and to whom he now writes to this end, that he might know the certainty and truth of the things, in the fense and meaning whereof he had before been instructed or taught, ver. 4. So St. Paul writing to Timothy, chargeth him to continue in the things which be bad learned, and bad been affured of, 2 Tim. iii. 14. First he had by catechising learned them, and been made to understand the true sense and meaning. of them; then was he by the use of farther means convinced of the truth and certainty of them; and in this affurance and belief he is exhorted to con-When therefore you fay, that you believe the articles of the christian faith, it is all one as if you faid, I am verily perfuaded, and affured in my mind, that thefe things are divine truths.

Q. Is it enough to believe these articles to be true, unless you understand the sense and meaning of them?

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A. No, I must believe them understandingly, or the belief of them cannot help me to live as a christian.

It is very true that you fay, believing them, and not understanding them, you believe you know not what. This is the reason why you are to be catechised, that, as Theophilus and Timothy, you may learn and understand the things, the certainty whereof you are to believe and to be affured of. Faith cometh by hearing, Rom. x. 14. But certainly it cannot come by hearing, without understanding Hear, and understand, said our what you hear. Saviour to the multitude, Matt. xv. 10. In the articles of faith, you are taught those principal doctrines of christianity, on which all our christian religion depends. They are not only speculative truths, and things the knowledge whereof is the only thing fought for (tho' indeed, if they were fo, it is unimaginable how we can know them, and not understand them); but they are truths directing to practice, and containing the reason of our practice; and it is madness to think, that any thing can be a reason or motive to a christian life, whilst it is not understood. Ignorance may indeed be, and I fear with too many is, the mother of superstition, and blind obedience; but never of true devotion towards God, whatever use besides the church of Rome makes of it.

Q. Is it not enough, understanding the meaning of these articles, to believe them true, unless you have some good reason to believe them?

A. No, certainly; to believe without some good reason for believing, is a very unreasonable thing.

Indeed it seems not only an unreasonable, but an impossible thing to believe without a good reason for it, or something which seems a good reason to him that believeth. No man can properly be said to believe what he finds no motive, which to him seems reasonable, to believe. There are, 'tis true, some people in the world, who would have nothing else called faith, or believing, but this most unreasonable thing, which makes the grossest absurdity slip down

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as glibly as the plainest truth. These are they who will allow no use of reason in religion. Some will not allow you rationally to infer a conclusion from granted premifes; but will have express words of scripture for every thing. No Trinity, nor diffinctions of persons in the Godhead will be own'd by them, because we find not a Trinity or three persons in the unity of the divine Nature there expressly mentioned: and yet at the same time will not allow any sense of the plainest words of scripture, which feems not reconcileable to natural reason. Some have been bold enough to tell us, that a christian ought to lay afide his own fente and reason, and refolve to be guided by the church alone, and that it is enough for him to believe as the church believeth : tho' yet, if he make no use of his reason, he can never know fo much as that there is a church, or what it is, or where it may be found, or why he must believe that church, whatever it be, more than a greater number of infidels or hereticks. In short, he that believes a thing, not having some good reason (at least as he thinks) to believe it, is deservingly called a credulous fool; and being imposed upon by fools or knaves, is often made to pay very dearly for his credulity.

It must be confessed, that there are a great many things of fo little worth or concernment to mankind, that the certain knowledge of them would be a very forry recompence for the pains one must be at about Yea, even in matters of religion, the things which some most busy their brains about, and difpute one another out of all charity for, are fuch things, that whether they be true or false, a man shall be but little the better for knowing them, and may think it the wifer course (as is proverbially said) rather to believe, than go to fee. But then, this is not properly to believe at all; nay, it is rather a flighting of the matter as not worth fearthing into: It is no faith, but a mere indifferency and unconcernedness. things D 2

things which you now come to learn, are no fuch trifles. They are the things of God, on the belief or disbelief whereof your eternal condition depends. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but be that believeth not, shall be damned, Mar. xvi. 16. In these things therefore, which are of so great importance, to believe a falshood must needs be a very dangerous thing; and it cannot but very highly concern you to fee, that ou have a sufficient reason to persuade you, that the things are true, and the belief of them necessary. You are commanded to be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you; yea, tho' it should cost you your lives to do so, I Pet. iii, 15. Can he do this, who hath no reason for his faith or hope? Or will any one be fo mad as to venture his life by professing to believe what he thinks not that he hath good reason to believe? It is indeed a very lamentable thing to fee a great many amongst us professing to believe all the articles of the christian faith, who never took any pains at all, either to inquire into the reasons and ground of that faith, or to attain to a right understanding of the things to be believed. Some have never been catechifed, nor would endure to be instructed; but are well content to live in ignorance all their days, let what will come on them in the end. Brethren, the christian religion is the most reasonable religion in the world, and hath been more convincingly evidenced to the world than any other. The gospel of Christ is preached to open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, Acts xxvi. 18. Nor doth it injoin any unreasonable task, fuch as is an implicit faith, and blind obedience, for which no reason can be given.

Q. May you not have reason enough to believe things which you do not fee?

A. Yes; Bleffed are they that have not feen, get bave believed, John xx. 29.

Q. Can you have any reason to believe things in-

A. Yes; I may, otherwise I should believe but

very little, if any thing.

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6. I befeech you, Sirs, confider these things very well; there is now a great need of doing fo, as ever there was in any age. There are amongst us at this. time very many cunning tools of Satan, who make it their business (as they of whom St. Paul warned the Colossians to take heed) to spoil young christians thro' philosophy, and vain deceit, Col. ii. 8. Some will not allow you to believe what you most plainly fee, that there is bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Others will not allow you to believe what you fee not, an invisible God, or a spiritual substance. Others again will not allow you to believe what your reason cannot clearly comprehend, or perfectly in all things understand, you must not believe the ever-blessed Trinity in Unity, nor the Incarnation of the eternal Son of God, nor that God hath a fon of his own nature; because these things are mysteries, not discoverable by the light of reason, nor, now that they are discovered by revelation, clearly intelligible in all things pertaining to them. But you are to be taught what I hope you may eafily learn.

I. That tho' we are to believe many things which we cannot see; yet can we not chuse but believe the things which we do see. Seeing is a sufficient reason for believing; or that excellent sense was given us in vain; for we are no better for sight, if no credit may be given to it. If I may not believe that there are bread and wine, when I see bread and wine, I may as well not believe there is a fire when I see it, and run into the midst of it. Nay, the apostles and first disciples of Christ had no advantage of us, by their seeing of Christ's person and miracles: If so little credit was to be given to their eyes, they were not (as they pretended to be) better fitted than other men to bear witness unto Christ in the world,

by this, that they had been with him, and were eye-witnesses of his marvellous works. What meant St. Luke to talk of their delivering unto him and others the things of Christ, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses? Luke i. 2. What meant St. John in those words? That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, (for we have seen it, and bear witness) that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you? I John i. 1, 2, 3. Why did St. Paul talk of Christ's being seen after his resurrection, of Cophas, of the twelve, of above five bundred brethren at once; after that of James, then of all the apostles? I Cor. xv. 5, &c. To what end was all this talk of seeing, if seeing be not a good

ground of believing?

2. That, although we cannot but believe what we fee, yet we may have sufficient reason to believe what we fee not, neither can fee; otherwise we cannot have reason enough to believe any thing but that which is present, for we cannot see either things past, or things yet to come. Not only all prophesies of future things, but all history of things already past, is writ to no purpose, if we must believe nothing but what we see. Grant but this, and you cannot believe there were any fuch persons as your father or mother, if they died before you knew them by fight. You must not believe that you were born as others are, because you did not see yourselves born. You must not believe that there was any man or thing in the world before you came into it; nor that there is any other country in the world, but what you have feen; nor that the fun will rife to morrow, or that night and day, fummer and winter, shall by course succeed each other, till you see it. Little thought the apoftle of all this, when he called Faith the evidence of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1. And again, We walk by faith, not by light, 2 Cor. v. 7.

3. You may have sufficient reason to believe many things, which by your reason you could never have

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discovered; and which, now that they are revealed unto you, your reason cannot thoroughly and perfectly in all things understand. And certainly the cannot feem strange to any considering man, who cannot but own, that there be many fuch mysteries in nature, as well as in religion: I think I might have faid, that all nature is mysterious; and do any, even the wifest man, whatever he can, he shall never be able to comprehend, and perfectly to understand it, tho' he cannot but believe it. Who is there that is in his wits. and neither blind nor deaf, but believes that he fees and hears, and that there are fuch things as light and colour, or that the corn and the grafs do indeed fpring up and grow out of the earth? Yet, shew me that man, if you can, who so clearly understands these common things in nature, that he is able to give a fatisfactory answer to all the questions which may be asked about the manner of fight, hearing, imagination, and the like; or about the nature of colours, and the transmission of the light thro' one solid body, and not thro' another, &c. Is not every man a mystery to himself, and incomprehensible in every thing by himself? Can he understand either body or foul, or the union of these two, or their mutual affecting each other, fo well, that he shall be able to satisfy himself in every thing relateing to himself, and his own nature? No, he must needs find himself baffled at home, and cry out, O bow fearfully and wonderfully am I made! And shall fuch a thing as short-sighted man, bassled with every piece of grass he treads upon, and having his understanding choaked with every grain of corn he feeds upon, pretend to fay, that nothing is to be believed in matters of religion, which are to him mysterious? Can he comprehend the mysterics of eternity? Yet must he needs grant, that something is eternal, or else neither he himself, nor any thing else could ever have been. In that holy religion which our bleffed Jesus hath taught us, there are indeed very great mysteries, and secrets hid from nature's eye; but D 4 may

may we not believe, that an eternal God, who must be transcendently perfect, or he is not God, speaking of his own nature, may fay those things of himself, which transcend the capacity of any creature perfectly to understand? Such things are called mysteries, not because they are not now clearly revealed and made known unto us; but because, before they were fo revealed, no mortal could by his natural reason make the least discovery of them: And now that they are revealed in the gospel of Christ, in such plain words, that we may easily understand the sense and meaning of them, and thereby perceive plainly what is either affirmed or denied; yet can we not so fully understand the things so revealed unto us. as to be able to answer all the difficulties we meet with in them, or to reconcile them with the commonly received principles of human reasoning or philosophy. We read therefore of the mystery of faith, I Tim. iii. 9. The great mystery of godliness, or of the christian religion, ver. 16. The wisdom of God in a mystery, I Cor. ii. 7. Things of God, which seem foolishness to the natural man, because he wants a spiritual eye to discern them, ver. 14. Now, whatever these mysteries are, and how much soever they are above the reach of our understanding, yet may we have reason enough to believe them, if we can but find reason enough to believe these things following.

First, That God is a Being, whose nature and per-

fections exceed our knowledge.

Secondly, That God may therefore tell us of things concerning his own nature, which we cannot perfectly understand.

Thirdly, That veracity is one of the perfections of the divine nature, that he cannot teach any false-hood, neither is willing to deceive us. And,

Fourthly, That the holy scripture is the word of

God, who is a God of truth, and cannot lye.

If, I say, we can find reason enough to believe these four things, then have we also reason enough to believe believe the most mysterious things which we find plainly taught us in the holy scripture, because it is his word who neither can nor will deceive us with a salsehood. That you may yet better understand this, I ask you again,

Q. What do you think to be a sufficient reason for your believing all the articles of the christian faith?

A. The authority of God, who in his word hath taught us them.

Q. Where do you find that word of God?

A. I find the word of God in those books, which together are called the Bible, that is, the book of holy scripture.

Q. May you not be taught the articles of your faith

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A. Yes, but I believe them not upon their authority, but God's only, whose word they teach me.

It is very true, that God hath always taught the world by men, and that he hath ordained an order of men to be our teachers to the end of the world; as I may more largely shew you in due time. bleffed Jesus sent forth his apostles into the world to teach all nations, Matt. xxviii. 19. And men are made ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God; and so, and no otherwise, are they to be accounted of, I Cor. iv. I. Yet our faith standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; by whose commission, and whose word, they preach. They are no more but ministers by whom we believe, I Cor. iii. 5. And therefore, tho' you are to hear them, and to learn of them, the word of God, that you may by their help understand the word of God, and see the reasons for believing it; yet is it not the authority of any man, or church of men, but that of God only, on which you may fafely rest for the truth and certainty of what you believe as a divine This is it which St. Paul commended in the Thessalonians: That when they received the word of God.

God, which they heard of him and other men, they did not receive it as the word of men, but (as it is in

truth) the word of God, I Theff. ii. 13.

Tho' men have always been teachers of God's word. yet was it always God himself who taught by them. For holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoft, 2 Pet. i. 21. And it was God that spake by the mouth of his boly prophets which have been fince the world began, Luke i. 70. The same God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Heb. i. 2. And what began to be spoken by the Lord, that is, by the Son, bath been confirmed to the world by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness both with figns and wonders, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghoft, Heb. ii. 3, 4. These men received the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things which were freely given them of God; which things also they spake, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, I Cor. ii. 13. And what they had feen and heard, they have in writing declared unto us, I John i. 3. This same word it is, and none other, which men are now to preach unto the world; and it is still true, that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, Rom. x. 17. And being taught by God's ministers, we are taught of God. And it pleaseth God by the foolishness of preaching (as it is by some accounted) to fave them that believe, I Cor. i. 21. Tho' all this while the men who preach have no dominion over our faith, but are belpers of our joy, 2 Cor. i. 24.

Take heed then how you be seduced by some at this time amongst us, and increasing daily, who despise the teaching of men, pretending themselves to be immediately taught of God, and to have a light within them whereby they see more than their teachers. For you see, that the it be God that teacheth us, yet hath he always, I mean, according to his ordinary way of teaching, taught his church by the ministry

of men: and what reason can such men give, why God should, for their sakes, lay aside his ordinary method, and in a miraculous way, teach them by

himself immediately?

Take heed also, in the next place, how you be led away by another fort of crafty feducers (as too many of late have been) to pin your whole faith on the fleeves of your teachers, without confulting God himself in his word, to learn of him what is true, and what is false. This is the fault, not only of the papists generally, who are to believe, that whatever their church teacheth is the doctrine of God; and whatfoever their priest teacheth is the doctrine of their church. whilst God's word is either locked up from them in Latin, and most of them cannot, or the reading of it forbidden, and fo they dare not, confult it : but also of too many of those who are called protestants, who are wont to take for granted all things that their preachers teach them, and taking them for godly men, think they may fafely follow them in all their by-ways. And hence have we fo many new fects of men springing up continually in the church. Let me ask you again,

Q. Is the boly scripture, or written word of God,

a perfect and sufficient rule of faith and life?

A. Yes, it is; because it is able to make one wife unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Q. Are all things necessary to salvation plainly

taught us in the scripture?

A. Yes, they are; for it is a lamp unto our feet,

and a light unto our paths, Pfal. cxix. 105.

§. If all this that you have told me be true, that the scripture is both full and plain in all things necessary to salvation; you cannot but see how great encouragement you have to be very diligent and constant readers of the holy scripture; and what reason you have to thank God, that you were born in a church

church which is so far from debarring you of this choice privilege, that she doth most earnestly exhort you to make the best use you can of it. You have great cause to continue in a church that deals so plainly and fairly with you, as not to desire that you should take all on trust upon her bare word, but as the Berwans, search the scriptures, to see if what she teacheth agree therewith, being not asraid of coming to the light that her doctrine may be approved to be of God.

The church of England hath put the holy scriptures into the hand of all her children, that they may read them with understanding in their mother tongue, and endeavoureth by catechising to put the principal matters contained in it into their heads, and by sermons to fasten them in their hearts and affections. O that there should be any yet amongst us so insensible of her tender love and care for their souls, as to leave her communion, and to scratch the breasts which gave them suck, and offer them daily the sincere milk of

the word!

Abhor (as you love God and your fouls) the abominable blasphemies of those people, whatever they be called, who affirm, That no man can certainly know the mind and will of God by any writing; as tho' what he had caused first to be intelligibly preached, could not be as intelligibly written; or as tho' God could not do, what any man can do that can write, certainly make known his mind to another by writing it, or causing it to be written. They tell you, that you must be brought acquainted with the will of God by the living voice of the church, or, as others fay, by the light within you. They tell you, that tho' the holy scriptures contain a divine truth, and the words of God; yet they are but an imperfect and obscure rule, and must be pieced out in what is wanting, by the traditions preserved in the church, and made good fense by the Holy Ghost in the church's breaft, or by the light within every man and woman. Without which they have the impudence

dence to call them a dead letter, black ink and paper, and what not? The most that the scriptures can do, say they, is to guide us to the Roman church, or to the Quaker's light within, and then we have no more use of them.

My dear friends and brethren, let me again and again intreat you, even as ever you would escape the dreadful torments of hell-fire, to abhor and stop your ears against all such blasphemies. Who can be more in danger of hell-fire, than they who have learned of the devil to vilify the word of God at this rate? And why are they at all this pains to blow out the light of the holy scriptures, or to bide it under a bushel; but because the doctrines they teach will not endure the glorious light of God's written word?

Hold fast to this, that the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain the word of the true and living God, and plainly enough teach us all those things that are necessary to our falvation. Plainly enough, I fay, for the instruction of those who have a mind to learn, and will make use of the ordinary helps and means of learning. You have already heard, how the scripture calleth itself the word of God. If then the scripture be true, it is the word of God; and if it be not true, I know not how it can direct any one either to the church, or to the light within; or why it should deserve more credit where it so directs (if it so direct indeed) than in any other parts of it. It was given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in the way of righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; yea, as you have said, made wife un-to salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. Of one small part of it the Pfalmist faith, The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the foul; the testimony of the Lord is fire, making wife the simple, Pfal. xix. 7. And when the law was given and written, the people were commanded to try all doctrines by it, and not to believe

any thing that contradicted it; To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to his word, there is no light in them, Ifa. viii. 20. By the scriptures of the Old Testament, our Saviour was contented himself to be tried. Search the scriptures (faith he to the fews); for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me, John v. 39. St. John faith of his own writing, which is but one small part of the scripture of the New Testament, These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name, John xx. 31. David certainly speaks of the scriptures, when he faith, Through thy precepts I get understanding; I have more understanding than my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation, Pfal. cxix. 99, 104. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, Pfal. xix. 8. We bave (faith St. Peter) a more fure word of prophely, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day down, and the day-ftar arise in your bearts, 2 Pet. i. And St. Paul faith, If our gospel be bid, it is hid to them that are loft, in whom the God of this world bath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, left the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

Take heed therefore, brethren, how upon any pretence of difficulty or obscurity, you be tempted to neglect the reading of the holy scriptures. And you who are parents or masters, be sure, if you can possibly, to get your children and servants taught to read them, and in the mean time cause them to be read unto them in your families. You can none of you have any good excuse for your ignorance of the doctrine of Christ, seeing he hath provided, that it should be so fully and clearly taught you in the holy scripture. You may there learn it, if you will; and if you will not, you must perish, and that most justly, because by your lusts and sins, for the love of which

you cannot endure the light of God's word which reproves them, you provoke God to leave you to be

led blindfold by the devil.

You have said, That you believe, and are verily persuaded in your mind, or well assured of the truth of all these articles of your belief; and that for this reason, because God himself hath taught them in his word, and that the books of the Old and New Testament contain that word of God. I intend therefore now to examine you in every one of these articles, and try first, how you understand them, and then how you can prove the truth of them by the holy scripture.

Q. Which is the first article of the Christian faith?

A. The first article is, I believe in God the Father,
&c.

Q. What things do you profess to believe in this article?

A. I herein profess to believe these four things.

1. That there is a God.

2. That God is a Father.

3. That God is Almighty.

4. That he is Maker of heaven and earth.

Q. What mean you by this word [God?]

A. By the word [God] I mean an eternal Being, endued with all possible perfection.

Q. Are you taught by the scripture, that there is

fuch a God?

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A. Yes, I am; for the scripture teaching me what God is, what are his attributes, and his works, how we are to honour him, and how he will bless us, must needs teach us to believe, that there is a God.

You say well, yet you must know, that this great fundamental truth, the foundation of all religion both natural and revealed, is rather supposed than proved by the holy scripture. He that comes to God, must believe that he is, Heb. xi. 6. This belief christianity found in the world established upon good grounds, such as, 1. The universal consent of all nations

nations in all ages of the world; how much foever they were divided in their opinions and practices, yet they all agreed in this. That there is a God to be worshipped. 2. The original of the world, whereof no man could ever give any rational and fatisfactory account, without the belief of a God. 3. The most rare and admirable order, variety, beauty, and usefulness of the parts of the world; all things being fo wifely contrived and ordered, that the wisdom and goodness of God doth plainly shew itself therein to the world. And, 4. The observation of God's providence and government hath persuaded the world to believe a God. Mankind, partly by tradition, which was handed down to them from their first parents, and partly by the light of natural reason, have been convinced of this truth, and have concluded, that this great and wifely contrived world could no more be what it is, without a most powerful and wise Maker, than a house can be without a builder, and that be that builds all things is God, Heb. iii. 4.

But men had by fin corrupted their nature, and had revolted from their obedience to the true God, and run into idolatry, worshipping the creature instead of God. And God in mercy caused the scripture to be written, to make himself and his works better known unto the world, that men might no longer go after idols and vanities to their own destruction; and, as Paul and Barnabas speak, that they might turn from these vanities (as idols are often called) unto the living God, which made beaven and earth, and the fea, and all things that are therein, Acts xiv. 15. It was not, I say, the principal design of the holy scripture to prove, that there is a God; but taking it for granted, that all men, by the light of nature, either were, or might eafily be convinced of that, its principal defign was to correct their errors and mistakes concerning God's nature, and his true worship; to shew them who is the true God whom alone they ought

ought to worship, and what kind of honour, worship and service they were to pay unto him. To describe God unto them, as far as his incomprehensible nature may be understood by men, so as that they might know what kind of Being God is, and

what dependence all things have upon him.

That there is a God, a first cause of all things, a Being most perfect in wisdom, power, and goodness, the fountain of all being, life, and bleffedness, is indeed (as before was faid) the very first principle of all religion. But of this we must be convinced, before we can rationally believe the holy scripture to be the word of God; for how should we believe it to be the word of him, whom we do not yet believe to be? And hence it is a vain thing to attempt the proving of this truth against the Atheist, by only shewing him that the holy scripture teacheth it; because all the authority which that scripture hath to command our faith lieth in this, that it is the word of God, whose being or existence is the thing in dispute, and yet to be proved. And yet, after all, let us but allow to the scripture, what is ordinarily allowed unto most other writings of men with a great deal less reason for it than here we have, I mean, that it contains a true history of things; and we may find in it the best arguments in the world for the being of a God, as you will fee anon. In the mean time, that you may have a true notion of God and understand what kind of Being he is, I will ask you some questions.

Q. Do you take God to be a bodily, or a spiritual and immaterial Being?

A. God is a Spirit, and the Father of Spirits, Joh. iv. 24.

Q. Is a spirit an immaterial substance?

A. Yes; a spirit bath not flesh and bones, or any thing whereby it may be handled or seen, Luk. xxiv. 39.

Q. Is God then an invisible Spirit?

A. Yes; he is the invisible God, no man bath seen God at any time, Col. i. 15. I John iv. 12.

E. Q. Can

Q. Can God be perfectly known by any creature, or is be incomprehensible?

A. No; he cannot, seeing he dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, I Tim. vi. 16.

Q. Is God an eternal Spirit, with outeither beginning

or ending?

A. Yes; he is the eternal God, the King eternal,

Deut. xxxiii. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17.

Q. Where is God, somewhere only, or every-where?

A. God is every-where, be filleth heaven and earth,
we cannot flee from his presence, Jer. xxiii. 24.

Pfal. cxxxix 7.

Q. Is God a living Spirit?

A. Yes; He is the living God, having life in himfelf, and with him is the fountain of life, Jer. x. 10. John v. 26. Pfal. xxxvi. 9.

Q. Is he an omniscient Spirit, knowing all things?

A. Yes; His understanding is infinite, neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his fight, Pfal. cxlvii. 5.

Q. Is be a good Spirit?

A. Yes verily; God is good, and doth good, good to all, There is none good but one, that is God, Pfal. cxix, 68. cxlv. 8 Matt. xix. 17.

Q. Is God a pure and boly (pirit?

A. Yes; He is the holy one, there is none holy as the Lord, glorious in holiness, Isa. xl. 25. I Sam. ii. 2. Exod. xv. II.

Q. Is he a true and faithful God?

A. Yes; he is the Lord God of truth, the Lord is faithful, a God that cannot lye, Pfal. xxxi. 5. 2 Thess. iii. 3. Tit. i. 2.

Q. Is God most just and righteous?

A. Yes; he is most upright, all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right is he, Isa. xxvi. 7. Deut. xxxii. 4.

Q. Is be not also very merciful?

A. Yes; he is the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, Exod. xxxiv. 4, 5. Q. Is

Q. Is be a loving God?

A. Yes; God is love, and it is a great love wherewith he loveth us, I Joh. iv. 8. Eph. ii. 4.

Q. Is God mutable, or can be change?

A. No; He is the Lord, he changeth not, with him is no variableness, or shadow of turning, Mat. iii. 6. Jam.i. 17.

Q. Is God most bappy and blessed in bimself?

A. He is God bleffed for ever, of him, and thro him, and to him are all things, to whom he glory for ever. Amen. Rom. xi. 36.

Q. Is be an Almighty God?

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A. Yes; He is the Lord God Almighty, he can do every thing, there is nothing too hard for him, Rev. iv. 8. Job xlii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 17.

6. You have hitherto answered very well, and all in the plain words of holy scripture, that is, of God himself, so that every answer is its own proof. All that you have faid concerning the nature of God, is the same which God himself hath taught you, and fo long as you flick close to this, you may be fure you have a right notion of God, and know how to give him a true worship suitable to his nature. is a spiritual, invisible, eternal, incomprehensible Being, every-where prefent, omniscient, perfectly holy and good, wife true and faithful, just and righteous, yet most loving and merciful, unchangeable, bleffed and powerful. You are not therefore to take any thing for God, nor to believe in, or worship any other as God, but what is in all things exactly fuch, as the holy scripture hath told you God is; otherwise you will set up an idol according to your own fancy, and your whole worship will be idolatry.

To have life is a greater perfection than to be without life; therefore the true God must needs be the living God, as he is called, fer. x. 10. and very often in the scripture, Deut. v. 26. fos. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, &c. So is he called in opposition to idols, called vanities, Acts xiv. 15. 1 Thess. i. 9. When God sweareth by himself, the form of his oath is

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usually this, As I live, Isa. xlix. 18. Fer. xxii. 24. Ezek. xviii. 3. xxxiii. 11. Rom. xiv. 11, &c. And thus he commands men to swear, The Lord liveth, Jer. iv. 2. Moreover he is called the living God, because with him is the fountain of life, neither had he life derived to him from any other, neither hath any other life but from him, In him we live, and move, and have our being, Acts xvii. 28. He giveth to

all life and breath, ver. 25.

You faid, That God is a Spirit, an immaterial Substance, such as cannot be perceived by any bodily fense. Therefore hath he no quantity, nor the dimensions of length, breadth, height, depth; nor any parts or members, as eyes, hands, feet, ears, and fuchlike. And feeing he is a most perfect Spirit, he is without all passions, perturbances or disturbances of mind, fuch as anger, fear, joy, hatred, &c. You must remember then, that whensoever you read in the holy scripture of the face, eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet; or of the anger, wrath, fury, jealoufy of God, and fuch-like; these things belong properly to bodies only, or to created spirits, and cannot be attributed to God, but figurately. They fignify not fuch things in God as they do in the creatures, but fomething else that may be, without disparagement of any divine perfection which is effential to an uncreated and most perfect Spirit. What such expresfions fignifie in God, you may eafily learn by diligently attending to what you read in the scripture, and unto fermons. Again, when you read of God's appearing and shewing himself unto men, and of their feeing him, and of his talking with them, and their hearing the voice of God; you must not imagine, that God himself (who is an invisible Spirit) was ever seen by any mortal man; or that any voice or words were ever uttered by God, as they are by men; but the meaning of fuch expressions is, that God, by some visible sign or token, made men sensible of his more special presence; and by the voice of some creature,

or angelical operation, as he saw good, made men hear and understand his will and pleasure. God himself no man bath seen, nor can see, I Tim. vi. 16. To have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape, said our Saviour, Joh. v. 37. See Deut.

iv. II, 12.

All other spirits had a beginning, and were created by God the Father of spirits. But God is an eternal Spirit, and without beginning. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world even, from everlasting to everlating, thou art God, so the Psalmist, Psal. xc. 2. God is styled, The high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, Isa. lvii. 15. His name is I AM, or I AM what I AM, Exod. iii. 14. The eternal and unchangeable Being: I am the first (saith he) and I am the last, and besides me, there is no God, Isa. xliv. 6. xlviii. 12. Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. The Lord which is, and which was, and which is to come, Rev. i. 8. iv. 8.

God's nature is of that transcendent excellence and perfection, that it is incomprehensible, far exceeding the reach and capacity of any created understanding, and perfectly known to himself alone. O Lord our God, thou art very great, thou art cloathed with honour and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, Pfal. civ. 1, 2. With God is terrible majesty, touching the Almighty who can find him out? Job xxxvii. 22. How little a portion is heard of him? Job xxvi. 14. He dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Therefore is his name exalted above all blessing and praise, Neh. ix. 5.

All created spirits, where-ever they be, are at the same instant no-where else. Now they are here, anon they are there, but never can they be both here and there at once. Only God hath immensity, that is, cannot be limited or bounded in his essence and presence, but is at once, and always every-where present, no-where absent. He filleth all things; bea-

ven (saith the Lord) is my throne, and earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye will build unto me? And where is the place of my rest? Isa. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 49. Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee, saith Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 27.

Hence also is God omniscient, or one that knoweth and feeth all things, which no created spirit doth. Can any bide himself in secret places, that I shall not see bim, saith the Lord? Fer. xxiii. 24. Whither Shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither Shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. Tea, the darkness bideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, the darkness and the night are both alike to thee, Pfal. cxxxix. 7, 8, 12. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him, with whom we have to do, Heb. iv. 13. This, dear brethren, is a matter we should in a manner never let to go out of our thoughts, that wherefoever we are, and whatfoever we are doing, we are always before the eyes of God, who is every-where present with us, and nothing that we fay, do, or think, can be concealed from him. He knoweth our thoughts afar off. He is acquainted with all our ways. There is not a word in our tongue, but he knoweth it altogether, Pfal. CXXXIX. 2, 3, 4.

Now this all-knowing, and all-feeing God, who observeth all our ways and doings, is a most holy God, even the Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, or armies; the whole earth is full of his glory, Isai vi 3. His name is Holy, Isai lvii. 15. Even the holy One, Isai xl. 25. He sweareth by his Holiness, Psal lxxxix. 35. Amos iv. 2. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity, Hab. i. 13. All evil is contrary to his holy nature, and that which he cannot but hate and abhor, where-ever he seeth it. He hath no pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him, Psal v. 4. By this holy God, actions are weighed,

weighed, or observed, considered, and examined, I Sam. ii. 3. His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good, Prov. xv. 3. He pondereth or trieth all man's goings, Prov. v. 21. There is no darkness, neither shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity

may bide themselves, Job xxxiv. 21.

This all-feeing and most holy God is the mighty God, the Lord of bosts is his name, great in counsel, mighty in work, and his eyes are open upon all ways of the sons of men, to give to every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings, Jer. xxxii. 18, 19. Wisdom and might are bis, Dan. ii. 20. He taketh the wise in their craftines. Job v. 13. There is therefore no wildom, nor counsel, nor understanding against the Lord, Prov. xxi. 30. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among ft the inhabitants of the earth; and none can flay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Dan. iv. 35. If God will not withdraw his anger. the proud belpers do stoop under bim, Job ix. 13. His is the greatness and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven or in the earth is bis, his is the kingdom, and he is exalted as head above all. In his hand is power and might, and in his hand it is to make great, and to give frength unto all, I Chron. xxix. II, 12.

This almighty God is also most just and righteous, excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice, Job xxxvii. 23. Judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne, Psal. lxxxix. 14. And this righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright, but the wicked his soul hateth, Psal. xi. 5, 7. He shall judge the world with righte-

ousness, Pfal. xix. 13.

All this duly considered, how should any poor mortal dare to sin against him, and not tremble at the thoughts of his holiness, power, and justice? Indeed we must all of us needs fink down in despair, and be even unsoul'd with the dread of this almighty

God, did he not assure us, that his power is tempered with clemency, and his justice with mercy, and his greatness doth not exceed his goodness, whereby be is good to all, and his tender mercy is over all his works, Psal. cxlv. 9. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, Psal. xxxiii. 5. And his goodness endureth continually, Psal. lii. 1. He is slow to anger, and of great kindness, Joel ii. 13. Good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him, Psal. lxxxvi. 5. He is full of compassion, Psal. cxlv. 8. And like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Psal. ciii. 13.

O that you would all be persuaded diligently to read the scriptures, and to take good heed to what you read therein! How soon would you discern there so much of the loving-kindness of the Lord, that your hearts would be knit to him for ever! You would easily learn there so much of God's most excellent nature, that you would conclude, that nothing is worthy to be loved in comparison of him; you would not care for pleasing any one but him, seeing he is every-where described unto us as the God of love, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. and of goodness even unto the unthankful and to the evil, Luk. vi. 35. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O Lord! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings, Psal. xxxvi. 7.

Q. How many Gods be there?

A. There is none other God but one, I Cor. viii. 4.

Q. Who is this one God?

A. He whose name alone is JEHOVAH, the most High over all the earth, the everlasting God, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. Gen. xxi. 33.

What the scripture teacheth you, that there is one true and living God, is a thing very clear of itself. Many Gods are needless, where one is sufficient; now one God, having all power, must needs be sufficient for all possible things; and therefore more such

are needless, and all but one must be needless things; which to say, what is it, but to say they are no Gods? Again, to say, there be many Gods, implies a contradiction; it is as much as to say, there is a God which is no God; for it is essential to God to have all power in himself, which none but one can have. If any other have a power equal to his, that other hath a power which he is not able to over-rule or controul; and if so, he hath not the power of God, and is not God.

There are indeed (as the scripture telleth you) gods many; and lords many, but it tells you withal, that whether they be in heaven or in earth, they are only such as are called gods, and that to us there is but one God, I Cor. viii. 5, 6. God himself calleth judges and magistrates by the name of Gods. I have said, (saith he) Te are gods, Psal. lxxxii. 6. Yet are they not gods by nature, but by office and ministry only; men advanced and put in authority by God, to minister judgment and justice upon earth in his name; who himself standeth in the congregation of the mighty, and judgeth among the gods, ver. I. And tells them plainly, saying, Te are the children of the most High, yet shall ye die like men, ver. 6, 7.

Those idols also which the heathen people blindly worshipped, and called gods, the scripture also calleth by the same name; not owning them to be so indeed, but to let us know what their worthippers falfely accounted them to be. They were but creatures of the true God at best, not the creator, Rom. i. 25. And as idols, they were the creatures of men, who gave them all the divinity they had, which indeed was none at all. By nature they were no gods, and were ferved by them only who knew not God, Gal. iv. 8. Called in scripture sometimes new gods, as Sometimes frange Gods, as Tofb. xxiv. 7udg. v. 8. 20. often vanities, and most commonly idols. All the gods of the people are idols, Pfal. xcvi. 5. Thefe were no gods, 2 Kings xix. 18. We know (faith St. Paul) that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there there is none other God but one, I Cor. viii. 4. Who is above all Gods. Pfal. cxxxv. 5. The Lord be is God, there is none else besides him, Deut. iv. 35. Even the Lord that made the world, and all things therein. The same which is called the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Facob, Exod. iii. 15. The God of Israel, Exod. v. 1. Who hath said, See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me; I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever, Deut. xxxii. 39, 40. He is the true God, the living God, and everlasting King: The Gods that have not made the heavens, and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under these beavens, Jer. x. 10, 11.

§. You have told me what you believe God to be, and that there is none other God, but one. You fay also, That you believe God to be a Father; tell me then,

Q. Whose Father is God?

A. I believe him to be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.

Q. Is be not the Father of all?

A. Yes; There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all, Eph. iv. 6.

Q. Is he not, in an especial manner, the Father of

believers or christians?

A. Yes; As many as received Jesus Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name, John i. 12.

God being the fountain and original of all being, and that first cause without which there can be nothing; he may well enough be called the Father of all things that are, God the Father, of whom are all things, I Cor. viii. 6. And more especially of all men, who were made in the image and likeness of God. Have we not all one Father? Hath not one

God created us? Mal. ii. 10. And in this sense (as most think) the first man Adam is called the Son of God, Luke iii. 38. And fo are the holy angels, 70b xxxviii. 7. And amongst men it is said of believers, That God predestinated them to the adoption of children by Fesus Christ to bimself, Eph. i. 5. God then is the Father of all by creation, the Father of believers by adoption, and the Father of Jesus Christ only by an eternal generation; as will be more plainly shewn you in what is to be faid on the second article. Of God's almightiness enough already hath been said. And now you fay farther, that you believe God to be the Maker of heaven and earth; and though you have by the way told me, in some measure, what your faith is concerning this point, yet I will try you herein by a few more questions.

O. What do you mean by heaven and earth?

A. By heaven and earth, I mean the world, and all things therein, Acts xvii. 24.

Q. Of what, and by whom did he make the world?

A. Through faith we understand, that the worlds were framed by the WORD of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear, Heb. xi. 3.

O. When did God make the world?

A. In the beginning, in fix days, Gen. i. I. Exod.

Q. Is God the Preserver as well as Maker of all

things?

A. Yes; God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and preserveth man and heast, Psal. xxxvi. 6.

Q. Is not God the Owner of all things?

A. Yes; The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein, Pfal. xxiv. 1.

Q. Doth God still govern and dispose of all things?

A. Yes, He reigneth over all, I Chron. xxix. 12.

Q. Did God make any evil thing?

A. No:

A. No; every thing that God made was very good, Gen. i. 31.

Q. Did God make any thing hefides this visible world? A. Yes; By him were all things created that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, Col. i. 16.

Q. Which are the chief of invisible creatures?

A. The angels, or ministering spirits, Heb. i. 13, 14.

Q. Are there many angels ?

A. Yes; There is an innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22.

Q. Which is the chief of visible creatures?

A. Man, whom God made a little lower than the angels, and crowneth him with glory and honour, Pfat viii. 5.

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There be two ways especially, whereby the generality of mankind in all ages of the world (as was said before) have been convinced, that there is a God, the light of natural reason, and the light of divine revelation.

By the light of reason men have ever concluded, that no other reasonable account can be given of the original of the world, or of the variety, beauty, constant order, and usefulness of all things therein, how they should come to be endued with such powers and virtues, and how they should retain the same; but that they had them from a most wife, good and powerful being, which is none other but God. And this indeed is it which the scriptures call us to consider and to meditate upon, the wonderful works of God. For works which no man can conceive possible to be wrought by any thing less than a divine power, must needs convince men of the existence of a divine Being. The beavens declare the glory of God, and the firmamament sheweth his handy work, Psal. xix. 1. Of old be laid the foundation of the earth, and the beavens are the work of his bands, Pfal. cii. 25. He bath made the earth by his power, be hath established the world by his wisdom, he bath stretched out the beavens

beavens by his discretion, Jer. x. 12. By the WORD of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the BREATH (or Spirit) of his mouth. Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Psal.

xxxiii. 6, 8, 9.

Neither is God known to us by his works of creation only, but by his works of providence and government, whether fuch works as being ordinary or extraordinary, they declare unto us the power, wisdom, justice and goodness of God, and his watchful eye over the world. One generation (faith the Pfalmist) shall praise thy works unto another, and shall declare thy mighty acts, Pfal. cxlv. 4. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men bis mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of bis kingdom, ver. 10, 11, 12. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing, ver. 15, 16. Who maketh the clouds his chariots, who walketh upon the wings of the wind. Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire. Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be moved for ever. Thou coveredst it with the deep, as with a garment, the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they basted away. Thou bast set a bound, that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, they give drink to every beast of the field. He wateretb the bills from his chambers, he causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and berb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread to strengthen man's beart. He appointeth the moon for seasons, the lun

fun knoweth his going down. O Lord, how wonderful are thy works! In wisdom bast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches: So is the great and wide fea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. These wait all upon thee. that thou mayst give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thy hand. they are filled with good; thou bidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their duft, Pfal. civ. 3, &c. God feedeth the fowls of the air, and cloatheth the grass of the field, Mat. vi. 26, 30. He giveth to the beaft his food, and to the young ravens which cry, Pfal. cxlvii. o. He giveth showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. Zech. x. I. He only maketh men dwell in safety, Pfal. iv. 8. Except the Lord build the boufe, they labour in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain, Pfal. cxxvii. I. The borse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord, Prov. xxi. 31. Yea, the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord, Prov. xvi. 33. Promotion cometh neither from the East. nor from the West, nor from the fouth, but God is the Judge, be putteth down one, and setteth up another, Pfal. lxxv. 6, 7. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him, 2 Chron. xvi. 9. By these and many the like texts of scripture may we learn what is the governing providence of God in all things. Before we pass on to the rest, I ask you,

Q. Who was the first man?

A. The first man was Adam, I Cor. xv. 14.

Q. Of what did God make Adam?

A. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, Gen. ii. 7.

Q. Who was the first woman?

A. Eve,

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A. Eve, the mother of all living, Gen. iii.20.

O. How did God make Eve?

A. The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and be took one of his ribs and made it a woman, Gen. ii. 21,22.

Q. What are the parts of man?

A. Man hath a foul, and a body, Mat. x. 28.

O. In what state did God make man?

A. God made man upright, in the image of God created he him, Eccl. vii. 29. Gen. i. 27.

Q. What mean you by the image of God?

A. God's likeness, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, and the dominion over other creatures, Gen. i. 26. Col. iii. 10. Epb. iv. 24.

Q. Where did God place man when he had made him? A. The Lord God planted a gardeneastward in Eden, and there he put the man to dress it, and to keep it, Gen. ii. 8, 15.

Q. What liberty gave be bim therein?

A. Of every tree of the garden, fave one, he might freely eat, ver. 16.

Q. What tree was that ?

A. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, whereof the Lord said unto him, Thou shall not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, ver. 17.

In these scriptures which you have here mentioned concerning the creation of the first man and woman, the common parents of all mankind, I desire you to observe these things; and labour thence, to season your souls with such a feeling sense of God's special love and savour to man, that you may love nothing in comparison of God, and be assumed that ever you should in any thing offend his divine Majesty.

1. God did not make man till the fixth and last day, after he had made all other creatures; and so had most richly furnished the world with all things which might conduce to his comfortable and pleasant dwelling therein, and be in any kind useful and serviceable to him. That so man at the first opening of

his eyes to look about him might behold the glory of the power, wisdom and goodness of his invisible Maker, and admire the riches of his love in all that wonderful provision which he had made for his entertainment, and might taste and see the loving kindness of the Lord.

2. That whereas, in the creation of all other things, we read no more, but that God said, Let it be, and it was; when God was about to make man, he seemed to enter into some fort of consultation or deliberation with himself about this great piece of work, how he should be made. Let us make man (said he) in our image, after our likeness, &c. Gen. i. 26. Not that God did indeed thus consult about it (for that's inconsistent with the perfection of God); but he speaks as tho' he had done so, that we might be made more sensible of his goodness to us, and the dignity of our nature, and so be careful to do no-

thing unworthy of either.

3. That the' God formed man's body of the dust of the ground, that the remembrance of his being made of dust might keep him also in remembrance of God's power to uphold and preserve him in the being which he had given him, even by any the most unlikely means; and also that it might keep him humble and lowly in his own account, and fenfible of his bodily frailty, feeing he might as eafily be turned into dust again, as he was at first made of it; which, by the way, should teach us all, not to fet too great a price upon our bodies, or to pamper them too highly, as tho' they were the chief parts of us, and the only things which deferve all our cost and care, as too many of us, very forgerful of ourselves, are wont to do: Remember that God placed, in this vile and earthly body of man, a most noble and heavenly inhabitant, a rational foul or spirit, fuch as no other bodily creature hath, endued with a clear understanding of all fuch things as it was needful for him to know, with a free will to chuse or refuse

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refuse what he judged advantageous or hurtful to him; and with a power to act or do according to his judgment, and his choice. That is, God made him perfect in his kind, a perfect man; who of all other creatures below was one fitted to contemplate in every thing the glory of his Maker, his own dependence on him, duty to him, and happiness in him, and so capable of religion, and to render praise and honour in the behalf of himself, and all the creatures below him, to the great Creator of the world.

4. That man was made in the image and likeness of God, that is, so far as a creature, and an imbodied creature, can be like unto God, who is an immaterial Spirit without body, parts or passions. As God is a living, immortal, understanding, holy, and free Spirit; so made he man, that is, one part of him, a spirit too, and gave him life and immortality, wildom, freedom of choice, and holiness. So that God is called more especially, in contradistinction to the flesh, The Father of spirits, Heb.xii. 9. He made man in a state of holiness, and pure innocence, and wife enough to have dominion over other things, to use them foberly and religiously to his Maker's glory. and his own comfort. God made him to have dominion over the works of his hands, he put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and what soever passeth through the paths of the seas, Pial. viii. 6, 7. God also prepared for him an habitation fuitable to his princely dignity, not leaving him to live in common with other animals, but in a pleasant and fruitful inclosure, a garden of delights. Where yet he feated him, not to spend his time in vanity and folly; to melt into idleness and wantonness, but to exercise himself in dressing and keeping it. and in meditating on the wonderful works of God, and in adoring his divine wildom and goodness, feeling and feeing in all things the obligations God had laid upon him to love, gratitude, and obedience; reaping every moment fresh comforts and delights in the various fruits God gave him free leave to eat of.

And here you should take notice, that no person how highly soever exalted, or what plenty soever he enjoys, can have any colour for idleness, and wasting his time unprofitably or wantonly. Every one is to busy himself in some honest and useful employment, unless he can prove himself a greater lord than Adam, or richer than he who had all things in the air, sea, and earth at his command.

9. You have told me in how happy a state and condition God at first made man. In this state he might have continued, had he been so mindful of his duty as he should have been. To affure him of his continuing happy, if he would continue in perfect obedience to his Maker, besides those many other trees, which God had made pleafant to the fight, and good for food, he planted one in the midst of the garden, which he called the Tree of life, Gen. ii. 9. whereof being eaten would preferve him in good health, and full vigour, free from fickness and death. to make him fensible of the dominion given him over other creatures. God brought of all forts of beafts and fowls before him, that he might give names unto them, ver. 19, 20. Lastly, God made him an help meet for him, for the propagation of mankind; a woman he made to be his wife, and bestowed the bleffing of fruitfulness on both him and her. Nor did God make the body of the woman, as he made that of the man, of the dust of the earth; but of one of the ribs of Adam, of a part of his body, fo that she was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, ver. 21, 22. This near relation between man and wife, was the first and nearest in the world, and is still to be accounted so. A man shall leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh, ver. 24. Mat. xix. 5. And they are to love and cherish each other, even as their own flefh,

flesh, and parts of the same body, Eph. v. 33. How then shall those excuse themselves to God for sinning against his institution, who are so far from helping, and cherishing, and comforting each other, that by their peevish and quarressome humours, they are perpetually vexing and disquieting one another, and render their lives most uneasy and miserable?

These two persons, Adam and Eve, united in marriage by God himself, were by him made to be the common parents of all mankind, for the replenishing of the whole earth, Gen. i. 28. That so all nations of the earth might be one blood, or kindred, Acts xvii. 26. That all might love and do good one to another, even brethren and fifters. O how injurious then are all they to God, and to human nature, who malign, hate, and deal unjustly with any man! Especially, how abominable is the doctrine of them who teach, that by nature every man is an enemy to every man, and that the state of nature is a state of enmity and war! Surely these monsters take the measure of all mankind by their own ill nature, and because they know themselves to be the worst of men, they would have no body thought better than the worst.

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You cannot but perceive by what hath been faid already, that it was man's greatest concern to continue in the favour of God; and that he could not hope to do fo, but by continuing innocent, as God had made him, and preserving the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, pure and intire in his foul. He knew how to do this, and God had given him power to do it, and also all the encouragement in the world to exercise that power. An unfinning obedience, and an absolute resignation of himself to the will and command of God his Maker, was his natural duty. To try him, and to exercise this obedience, God set in the garden a tree, which, from the event, was called the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen. ii. 9. And having given him free leave to eat of all the rest, he gave him but this

one easy positive law, that we read of, not to eat of the fruit of that one tree, threatening him, that in the day be eat thereof be should surely die, ver. 17. Tho' to eat of the fruit of one tree may possibly feem to them, who consider nothing but the worth of the fruit, and the act of eating it, a matter of small weight, and therefore no great offence; yet when all circumstances are duly pondered, it will be found otherwise. It is the authority and will of God that we are in all things to submit unto; and whether the act and matter commanded or forbidden, be great or small, weighty or light, considered barely in itself, vet is the authority of the law-giver always one and the same; and the less the matter is in itself, the more is the authority of God affronted; we shewing that we little or nothing regard it, when for a thing of petty concernment we wittingly disobey it. The eating therefore of this fruit was a very great fin, whatever the fruit was, for it shewed how, notwithstanding God's liberality in granting unto man all other fruits, and his forbidding the eating of this, only to try and exercise his obedience; man set so little by the authority of God, or his duty of obedience, that he chose rather to disobey, than to want what was altogether needless, and could serve at best only to fatisfy his curiofity.

It was very fit, that man should have rested him-self contented, and been very thankful for that measure of knowledge and wisdom, which God, the best Judge, saw needful for him; and it was in him an inexcusable ambition and presumption, to attempt to grow wifer than God would have him. He knew good already, and continuing obedient, he had never known any thing else but good. And what good could it do him to know evil? He could never have any experiment of the knowledge of evil, but by disobeying the will of God, and that would be to his cost

and forrow.

When God had made the world, and all things therein, we cannot but in reason suppose, that God should govern every thing according to the nature of it. Things which had no understanding nor reason given them, were not capable of the laws of morality, which they could not be made fensible of. But God, having made man a rational creature, with a natural faculty of knowing good and evil, and of chusing and doing what is reasonable, and what he could understand to be both his duty and his interest, gave him moral laws to govern himself by; the sum of all which was this, That he should always live in an intire obedience to the will of his Maker, after what manner soever it either then was, or afterwards This man knew should be made known unto him. to be very just and equal, and a fit law to be given to fuch a creature as God had made him. This is the law of innocence given to all mankind in our first father Adam.

Q. Did Adam keep this law?

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Q. How was he tempted to break it?

A. The serpent beguiled Eve thro' his subtility, and she took of the fruit of the tree, and did eat, 2 Cor. xi. 3. Gen. iii. 6.

Q. Did Adam also eat of it?

A. Yes; the woman gave also to her husband, and he did eat. Thus by one man fin entered into the world, Gen. iii. 6. Rom. v. 12.

Q. What mean you by fin?

A. Sin is the trangression of the law, I' John iii. 4.

Q. What is the punishment of fin?

A. The wages of fin is death, Rom. vi. 23.

Q Should not man have died, if he had not sinned? A. No; death entered into the world by sin, Rom.

v. 12.

Q. What mean you by the serpent which beguiled Eve?

A. The old serpent the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, Rev. xii. 9.

That you may the better understand, how man was at first tempted and drawn into sin by the devil, it seems necessary, that you be taught, what the devil is, and after what manner he is wont to tempt

people to break the commandments of God.

That you may understand what is meant by the devil, I must put you in mind of what you told me before, that besides those creatures which we see, God also made some invisible creatures which we cannot fee, called angels and spirits. When God created these angels, we are no-where told. Moses giving us an historical account of the creation of the visible world, makes no mention of the creation of these invisible creatures. And whether or no they were created before this invisible world, no man can certainly tell us, tho' fome think it not improbable that they were, because of those words which God spake to 7ob, Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth? &c. When the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Job xxxviii. 4, 7. By the morning stars, and fons of God, they think the angels to be meant, which are called angels of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14. However this be, it is no necessary point of faith, and it is enough for us to know, that they were made by God, and therefore were all made very good and holy. Yet now they are not all fuch, but some of them continue good and holy, and these are now commonly meant by the name of angels, especially when used alone without any addition; and others of them are become evil and wicked, which are commonly called devils.

The good angels are those holy spirits, which continued from the beginning in their obedience, and are confirmed in the same holy and glorious state wherein

they were at first made and set by God. These yield all humble and ready obedience to his will, called the elect angels, I Tim. v. 21. Angels or messengers of God, Luke xv. 10. The chariots of God, even thousands of angels, Pfal. Ixviii. 17. The Lord's train, Ifa. vi. 1. Who always behold his face, Mat. xviii. 10. Standing round about bis throne, Rev. v. 11. Mighty angels, 2 Theff. i. 7. That excel in ftrength. and do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of bis word: bis bosts, and ministers that do bis pleasure, Pfal, ciii. 20, 21. These are God's beavenly bost, or army, Luke ii. 14. An innumerable company, Heb. xii. 22. There be many legions of them, Mat. xxvi. 53. Whom God fends about the world, employing them in fuch fervices and ministries as pleaseth him. Are they not all ministring spirits sent forth to minister for them that shall be beirs of salvation? Heb. i. 14. To instance but in a few of these at present. Sometimes they are fent to reveal fomething from God unto men. Thus the angel Gabriel was fent to make Daniel understand the vision, Dan. viii. 16. ix. 22. So the angel talked with Zechary, informing him concerning the vision, and instructing him what to fay, Zech. i. 9, 14. The angel of the Lord foretold the conception, birth, and office of John the baptist to his father, as he ministered in the temple, Luke i. 11. And the same angels saluted the blessed virgin Mary, affuring her of the conception, birth, name and office of our bleffed Lord and Saviour, ver. 28. Sometimes they are fent to comfort, and relieve, and rescue such as are in calamity, streight, or danger; as they rescued Lot from the destruction of Sodom, wherein he dwelt, Gen. xix. 15. And Isaac from the knife of his father Abraham, Gen. xxii. 11, 12. And the apostles out of prison, Acts v. 19. xxvii. 23. They are fet as a guard about the children of God, to keep, defend and protect them. As Pfal. xci. 11, 12. He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their bands, bands, left thou dash thy foot against a stone, Psal. xxxiv. 7. These were the horses, and chariots of fire round about Elisha in the mountain, 2 Kings vi. 17. They encamp about them that fear God, and deliver them, Psal. xxxiv. 7. This little shall suffice

to be faid in this place of the good angels.

The evil angels are they which sinned, and not keeping, nor contented with their first state, rebelled against God, and lest their habitation, whom God cast down to hell, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. These are they which are called devils, and they are very many, Mark i. 34. A legion of them had possessed one man, Mark v. 9. These evil angels or devils are, for their rebellion, delivered by God into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment, 2 Pet. ii. 4. And shall then be cast into everlasting fire prepared

for the devil and his angels, Mat. xxv. 41.

There be fundry orders both of good and evil angels; though we are not told what government there is amongst them. We read of archangels, or chief angels, I Theff. iv. 16. Such as Michael, Gabriel, &c. Also of thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, Col. i. 16. Amongst the devils we read of one called to by way of eminence, as ruler of the rest; as before, The devil and his angels. The great dragon, the old serpent called the devil, and Satan. Rev. xii. 11. Beelzebub, the prince of devils, Mat. xii. 21. The prince of the power, or army, of the air, Eph. ii. 2. The rulers of the darkness of this world, vi. 12. The angel of the bottomless pit, called Abaddon, and Apollyon, Rev. ix. 11. The wicked one, Mat. xiii. 19. The tempter, Mat. iv. 3. The accuser of the brethren, Rev. xii. 10.

The word [Devil] fignifies a calumniator, or false accuser, as doth [Satan] an advertary; [Apollyon] a destroyer; [Beel-zebub] the lord of flies. It is the business of our adversary the devil, as a rearing lion to walk about secking subom be may destroy, I Pet. v. 8. He is a murtberer from the beginning, a lyar,

and the father of lyes, John viii. 44. He transformeth himself into an angel of light, seeking whom he may deceive under a disguise of godliness, 2 Cor. xi. 14. The god of this world, who blindeth the minds of them that believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. Taketh men in his snare, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Filleth their hearts to lye against the Holy Ghost, Acts v. 3. Catcheth away the good seed of God's word sown among men, Mat. xiii. 9. And soweth tares in the field, ver. 39. Corrupteth mens minds, 2 Cor. xi. 3. Is a lying spirit in the mouth of false prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 22. And persecuteth the church, Rev. xii. 7, 13.

All these angels, whether good or bad, are all subject unto Christ, and under his power, either willingly or unwillingly, and he maketh what use of them he pleaseth in his kingdom. Angels, and authorities, and powers, are made subject to him, I Pet. iii. 22.

Now the devil with his angels, that is, the first leader and head of the rebellion, and all that were persuaded by him to take his part, and follow him, being cast down most justly by God for their ambition, and aspiring to a state above that which God had affigned them; finding themselves to be irrecoverably miserable, having lost the favour of God for ever, and all the comforts and glories of heaven; and feeing man created in the image of God, and defigned by him to enjoy the happiness which they had loft; and well knowing, that he could not miss of it any other way, than by finning, as they had done, in hatred to God, under whose wrath they lay, and in envy to man, whose happiness they were not able to endure, they refolved to do all that in them lay to prevent it, by tempting him to fin by breaking the command which was given him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And feeing the ferpent, or fome one kind of ferpents, more subtile by nature than any beast of the field which God had made, Gen. iii. 1. the cunning tempter

tempter made use of a serpent of that kind as the sittest instrument for his wicked purpose; or it may be, he took on himself the form of such a serpent

to appear in to the woman.

Now it will be of great use to us to observe well the methods of deceit, which this grand adversary of mankind used in this his first temptation of Adam to sin; for by the same methods he now prevails over a very great part of the world, and tempts men to continue in their disobedience to God. It concerns us therefore very greatly, not to be ignorant of his devices, 2 Cor. ii. 11. Some whereof I shall endeavour to shew you.

§. We are now to consider some of those devices of the devil which we spake of the last time. And

they were these especially.

1. The devil in the first place addresseth his temptation to the woman. He affaults not Adam immediately, but the woman; hoping by her the more eafily to prevail upon the man. He knew the woman to be the weaker vessel, I Pet. iii. 7. and hoped she would not be so able as the man to bear the shock of a strong temptation, both because of the weakness of her judgment, and the strength of her affections. He first therefore set upon her, and too successfully. Whence St. Paul faith, Adam was not deceived, that is immediately by the serpent; but the woman being deceived, that is, first deceived, was first in the transgression, I Tim. ii. 14. The devil speeding so well herein, hath ever fince made use of this craft. Would the devil have the Jews persecute Paul and Barnabas? He moves them to fir up the devout and bonourable women against them, Acts xiii. 50 Would he advance an herefy, or a wicked practice under a cloak of zeal and piety? He fends his instruments to creep into bouses, and lead captive silly women, laden with fins, led away with divers lufts, ever learning, and never

never able to come to the knowleage of the truth, 2 Tim.

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2. The devil attempts in the first place to possess the woman with hard thoughts of God, as though he had dealt with them too rigidly and feverely, injoining them things unreasonable, and against their nature, whilst he denied them the liberty of eating of that tree as well as of the rest. Tea, (saith he) bath God said indeed, Te Shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Gen. iii. 1. What a piece of cruelty is this? Why did he plant that tree there among the rest? Why did he make the fruit of it desirable? Why gave he you eyes to fee it with, and appetites to defire it? Why should your appetites be restrained from the things which are most pleasant? Is not this to fet this tree in your fight on purpose to torment you? This looks like injustice in God, not to allow unto men fuch things, as by the very nature which he hath given them, they cannot but defire.

3. When he saw that the woman would not be persuaded, and whatsoever cruelty or severity it might seem to be, but that God had indeed forbidden it upon pain of death, saying, Te shall not eat of it, lest ye die, Gen. iii. 4. he would tempt her to believe, that though God had said so, yet it should not be as he had said; but that God would be more merciful than to punish with death for so small a matter. Te shall not surely die, said he, ver. 4. Thus was the devil from the beginning a lyar, and the sather of it. John viii. 44. And how many thousands doth he still destroy by this lye; persuading them to hold on considertly in their sins, presuming of mercy in the end, notwithstanding God hath threatened nothing

less than eternal damnation?

4. Thi scunning ferpent knowing well how defireable a thing knowledge is, how much it tends to the perfecting of human nature, so that it is natural for man to endeavour after it, and the more he knows already, to be so much the more desirous of attain-

ing to higher degrees of knowledge, makes his advantage of this natural defire, tempting them thereby to eat of the forbidden fruit, that of the tree of knowledge, as a fit means of improving in knowledge and wildom: Intimating farther, that if it was forbidden, it was so for this cause; That God was jealous lest they should grow over-wife, and too like himself; that he envied them so great an happiness, and therefore forbad them the means of it. God dotb know. (faith he) that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil, ver. 5. He would make them believe, that God, out of ill will to them, laid this command upon them. Why should they be debarred of tasteing all the pleasures the world afforded, whether good or evil? To know as much as they could, would do them no Hurt; and why should they be hindered from trying the experiment?

5. He represents the forbidden fruit with all the advantages he could to the woman's fancy, in hope to make it the more effectually to work upon her affections, and beget in her most earnest longings after it. Hence is it said, first, That when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and, secondly, That it was pleasant to the eyes; and, thirdly, a tree to be desired to make one wise, ver. 6. she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat. Thus in all respects had the devil represented the tree unto her, and after

that she complied with the temptation.

6. Having thus overcome the woman with his wiles, by her he overcame the man also. He knew, the love which Adam had to his wife was so very great, that he would hardly deay her any thing; she was bone of his bone, and slesh of his slesh, and so closely were they united each to the other in conjugal affection, that he would even resolve to live and die with her, and make her fortune, whatever it should be, his own. If the devil then could make sure of her first, he feared not but by her mediation,

with her, and he did eat. These are some of the wiles of Satan to ruin men. A short sum of them St. John gives us, together with the best direction how to resist them. The sum of them is, The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, I John ii. 16. These are not of the Father, but of the world. These are the devil's bates, wherewith he tempts men to swallow the hook. The best direction to conquer the temptation is given ver. 15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. He is certainly taken in the snare of the devil.

Thus were our first parents tempted by him, and drawn away from their obedience to God. You said, that God did threaten Adam, that in the day he eat

of the forbidden fruit, he should surely die:

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Q. Did Adam die so soon as he had eaten it?

A. No; But he then became mortal, and was sentenced to death by God, saying, Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return, Gen. iii. 19.

God having, as was said before, resolved to people the world by one man and one woman, Adam and Eve, the common parents of all men, he did not immediately destroy them from off the face of the earth, for their transgression of this law; neither was this the thing threatened in those words, Thou shalt surely die, or dying thou shall die; but it was this, that from that day forward they should be in a dying condition; then they should become mortal, and justly sentenced to death, as the due wages of their sin, and innumerable evils they should labour under in this life, till it should please God to bring them to execution; they henceforth should be dead in law, and obnoxious to all the miseries and calamities of mortals, who must at length certainly die.

Yea, tho' they remained naturally alive, yet they henceforth became spiritually dead. Dead, I say,

they were to all goodness, and thereby also became liable to eternal death. By finning they had stripped themselves of their innocence, and original righteoufness wherein they were created, and which were indeed their life and glory. By hearkening to the devil's temptation, and believing him more than God, they were fallen from God's love and favour. and had forfeited all right to his protection, by their disobedience to him. They lost the gracious influences and affiftances of his holy Spirit, and were brought into flavery and bondage under him that bath the power of death, the devil, Heb. ii. 14, 15. His fervants they were become, whom they had chosen to obey. And having thro' his persuasion let locse the reins to their appetites and lufts, these were now become masterless, and their reason had lost its command, and directing power; their depraved wills being wholly enflaved to their lufts, refused its government and guidance, and they were now in the high-way to death and perdition; and every day they tafte more and more of the bitter fruits of their disobedience.

1. They grow ashamed of themselves. Before they had finned, they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed, Gen. ii. 25. What could innocence have in it to be ashamed of? What matter of shame could there be found in the unstained image of God? But now their eyes were opened, as the devil told them they should be; and all that they got by it, was to fee how naked he had made them to their shame. How could they chuse but with confusion of face, and horror, and amazement of foul, with dejected countenances, and breaking hearts, fee and feel themselves so strangely changed from what they lately were? They felt in themselves an uneasy and irresistible inclination and proneness to evil, and as strong an averseness from, and loathing of goodness; a load of troubles and vexations lying on them, and no wisdom or power to ease themselves of them. How must they needs be consounded to find so little of God's image, and so much of the devil's, on their souls? Or to find in their bodies any thing that stood in need of either a covering for its filthiness, or a defensative for its weakness? When but a little before, their innocence was both their glory and their guard: But, alas! the devil hath now prevailed so much over the natural modesty of mankind, that they are no longer ashamed, neither can they blush at any abomination; wickedness of all sorts is so much in fashion, that men can glory and pride themselves in nothing more than in their shame and nakedness.

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2. They grew afraid of God, the fountain of their being and happiness, in whose love and bleffing they found nothing before but comfort and delight. Their conscience accused them both of the greatest folly and baseness imaginable, and made them think with horror, on the vile ingratitude they had shown to their good and gracious Maker, and how justly this behaviour must needs provoke his wrath and indignation against them. The very apprehension of his presence was become very terrible to them, they imagining that he must needs shew himself armed for vengeance on them, who had fo causelesly and unworthily disobeyed him, and broken a law wherein nothing but their own good was intended. They heard the voice of the Lord God, and hid themfelves from his presence, ver. 8. Even as a thief or a murderer would run to hide himself from him that came to apprehend him. Yea, a guilty conscience makes one to fear, even where no fear is.

3. They became very foolish, and betrayed the weakness of their understanding, by endeavouring to hide their shame from the eyes of him who seeth all things. They would cover their nakedness with a sew sig-branches, and went to hide themselves among the trees of the garden. I was afraid, (said Adam) because I was naked, and I bid myself, ver. 10.

And

And after he faw, that this was but a vain attempt, and that his person could no-where be hid from the omniscient God, yet doth he what he can to hide his fin, at least the foulness and greatness of it. He confessed indeed that he was naked, but we find not that he confessed that it was himself, who by his fin had made him fo. This he doth all he can to put off from himself, and to invent excuses and pretences to lessen it, and to shift off all the guilt of it to others. feeming to reflect it even on God himself, as tho' he had been in some measure accessary to it. The woman, faid he, whom thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat, ver. 12. And in like manner the woman excuseth herself, and lays the blame upon the serpent, faying, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat, ver. 13. Such as these were the fruits of the first fin.

But now see the wonderful mercy of God, in the methods he used to bring them to repentance. First, He awakens them by his call, The Lord God called unto Adam, and said, Where art thou? Gen. iii. 9. Secondly, He examines them concerning the fact committed; Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat? Ver. 11. What is this thou hast done? Ver. 13. Thus God would bring them to a fight of their fin, and of the unreafonableness, and heinousness of it. Thirdly, Hereupon God proceeds in judgment to pass sentence on And here to shew them yet more how detestable and odious a thing all sin is to him, and how altogether inexcusable in them; and that he might leave them a perpetual remembrancer hereof, in the the first place he lays his curse upon the serpent, tho the ferpent could not be guilty of any fin, and had been abused only by the devil, as an instrument wherein, or in the form whereof, he managed the temptation. The ferpent is doomed henceforward to crawl on its belly, or rather breast, which it is probable enough this fort of ferpents did not formerly

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merly do. And dust must be henceforth all the sood it must expect. Dust shall be the serpent's meat, Isa. lxv. 25. As of the enemies of God it is said, They shall lick the dust like a serpent, Mic. vii. 17. Psal. lxxii. 9. And lastly, There must be a perpetual enmity betwixt the serpent and mankind, whereby it should be in continual danger of being killed by men; and they of being bitten by it, ver.

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In the next place God layeth his curse upon the devil himself, which had thus abused the serpent for the ferving of his own wicked ends. And indeed the threatening but now mentioned, of putting enmity between the woman and the serpent, doth principally belong unto the devil, being to him a curse, and unto her a promise. I will put enmity (faith God to the serpent) between thee and the woman, and between thy feed and her feed; it shall bruise thy bead, and thou shall bruise his beel, ver. 15. That the devil is called a serpent, you have already heard. And the feed of this ferpent the devil are all the apostate angels, or wicked spirits that follow and imitate him, as tho' he were their father; and for the fame reason, all wicked men resembling him in wickedness. For the devil hath no seed or children, but by imitation only. And all fuch as imitate him, may, as our bleffed Saviour expressly called some of them, be called ferpents, and a generation of vipers, Mat. xxiii. 33. St. Paul stuck not to call Elymas. the forcerer, a child of the devil, Acts xiii. 10. Yea, Christ called Judas, the traitor, a devil, John vi. 7. And to the wicked Fews, he faid, Te are of your father the devil, John viii. 44. And who so ever worketh not righteousness, is one of the children of the devil, I fob. iii. 10. He that committeth sin is of the devil, ver. 8. Now, on the other hand, the feed of the woman is principally the Messias, or Christ; who was so to be the feed of the woman, as not to be the feed of a man. A virgin, faith the prophet, shall conceive, Isa. vii.

14. He is called, indeed, the feed of Abraham, Gal. iii. 16. because born of a virgin who was of the seed of Abraham; but such as was made, not of a man, but of a woman, Gal. iv. 4. He, I fay, is especially here meant, yet not only he, but he and his members, who are all to fight under him against the devil. Eph. vi. 12. God threatens the devil, that this feed of the woman, Christ Jesus, should bruise his head, that is, his power and dominion; be should destroy the works of the devil, I John iii. 8. Accordingly be cast out the prince of this world, as the devil is called. John xii. 31. He came to destroy him that had the power of death, the devil, Heb. ii. 14. And in, and by him, all good christians, resisting the devil, stedfast in the faith, I Pet. v. 9. And to this end, putting on the whole armour of God, they are able to fland against the wiles of the devil, Eph. vi. 11. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet, Rom. xvi. 20. God giving them the victory thro' our Lord Tefus Christ, I Cor. xv. 57.

In the third place, the punishment which God laid on the woman, was the multiplying of her forrow in conception, and bringing forth of children; and becoming so helpless in herself, that she should earnestly desire to live under the protection of an husband, tho' often on very hard terms, even those of living in subjection and slavery to the unreasonable will and humour of a man, who hath neither wit nor grace enough to govern himself, and his brutish passions. I will greatly multiply thy forrow, and thy conception, said God; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy busband, and he shall rule over thee,

ver. 16.

Lastly, For the sin of Adam, in hearkening to the voice of his wife, and eating of the forbidden tree, God sirst cursed the ground. In sorrow (said he) shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the berb of the field, in the sweat of thy face shall

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shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return, ver. 17, 18, 19. He must labour painfully for a poor livelihood; he must be fed no longer in the garden, but in the field abroad, and after a few troublesome days yield to death. God now sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken; and by cherubims with a slaming sword turning every way, guarded from him the tree of life; that so he who had now lost his right to life by his sin, might be made sensible that he was unable by his own power to recover it again.

Q. Did Adam's fin do us any burt?

A. Yes; for in Adam we all die, I Cor. xv. 22.

Q. How came we all to die in Adam?

A. Because by his disobedience we were made sinners, Rom. v. 19.

§. Adam and Eve were the first man and woman. and they were the first parents of all that have been or shall be born, from the beginning to the end of the world. All men and women were then virtually and originally in Adam's loins, as the effect is in the cause, or as the branches in the tree and root, or as the streams in the spring and fountain. We are all of us looked on and dealt with by God, as his natural offfpring; and so considered as one man, or members of one body in Adam. What law God gave to him, he gave to all mankind in him, even the law of pertect innocence, or unfinning obedience. God threatened him withal, he threatened all mankind withal in case of disobedience. And whatever promife of bleffedness was made to him, continuing in his obedience to God, the same was made allo to all that should descend from him, on the same condition of unfinning obedience. So that Adam and all his posterity might have been for ever happy G 2

in the love of God, if they would have persevered in their obedience to God.

But now it is far otherwise. Our first parents, as you have heard, brake the commandment of God, and by their sin, both sell from the savour of God, and from their right to happiness, given them on condition of obedience; and also corrupted their nature; human nature, now no-where but in them, was in them mightily weakened and depraved. It is certain therefore, that Adam lost and forfeited all that blessedness, whatever it was, which was by promise made over to him, on those conditions only which he did not perform, and that not for himself alone, but for a'l his posterity. The children cannot hope to inherit the estate, which their parents have already, either by their ill-husbandry spent and wasted, or

by their rebellion forfeited and loft.

Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, having an immortal spirit put into him, and being endued by God with knowledge and wisdom, righteousness and holiness, being upright and free from all vicious inclinations, and corrupt affections, and able to do whatfoever God had made his duty to do. Had he not been tempted to fin, but withftood and conquered the temptation, as he both might and should have done, this image of God had been preferved intire and undefaced in him; and begetting children in his own likeness, they should have been born, as he was created, after the image of God. But now he, by finning, being become most unlike to the holy God, and more like unto the devil, must beget children most unlike unto God too. Even as Cain his first-born, who was of that wicked one, that is, of the devil, and flew his brother, I John iii. 12. Where the root is rotten, the tree, branches and fruit cannot be found and good. It is plain, that we are all now born in weakness and ignorance, and have early inclinations to evil, and are hardly taught to be good, or to make a right use of our reason. Who

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Who (faith 70b) can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Job xiv. 4. That which is born of flesh (faith our Saviour) is flesh, mere flesh, corrupted flesh; so that one must be born again of God, and be made a new creature, before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven, John iii. 6. Flesh and blood, and that corrupted, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and incorruption, I Cor. xv. 50. The Pfalmist thus confesseth of himself, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, Pfal. li. 5. I know (saith St. Paul) that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. How to perform that which is good, I find not, Rom. vii. 18. He speaketh of a sin that dwelleth in us, a law, that when we would do good, evil is prefent with us; the law of our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of fin, which is in our members, ver. 20, 21, 23. The scripture, therefore faith he, bath concluded all under sin, Gal. iii. 22. And death, which together with fin, entered by one man, bath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, Rom. v. 12. All have sinned, and come Short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23. And by the offence of one, judgment is come upon all men to condemnation, Rom. v. 18. And death hath reigned even over them, that finned not after the fimilitude of Adam's transgression, ver. 14. Infants who never brake any law of God by actual fin, are made fubject to death, by the corruption of their nature in Adam.

This is that which is called original fin. The want of that original righteousness, which Adam had, and such a pravity of nature, as not only indisposeth us to love and serve God, and to do his will; but strongly inclines us to do evil, and to break his laws. So that the natural or unregenerate man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishmess unto him, neither can be know them, because they are spiritually discerned, I Cor. ii. 14. The carnal

mind is enmity to God, not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. The whole imagination of the thoughts of man is evil, and that continu-

ally, Gen. vi. 5.

Thus you see into what a corrupt, and also miserable state we are all brought by the sin of Adam. Our understanding is become very blind, and very vain. We know but very imperfectly the things that are most necessary to be known, and we are very bufy and inquisitive into the things that are not worth our learning. Our wills are fet upon things that are most hurtful to us, even impatiently longing after those things whereby God is most dishonoured, and our fouls brought into great danger of destruction. Our affections are become ungovernable, diforderly and irregular. We have a natural enmity to God and goodness, we are very weak in refifting of temptations, and the performance of all religious duties. We are very unconstant to our refolutions, and were we left to ourselves, would do almost nothing else but fin, and run headlong into hell.

Q. In this state of sin what may we justly expect

from God ?

A. Nothing, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, 2 Thess. i. 9.

Q. Is there no hope that we may yet be faved from

this desiruction?

A Yes; blessed be God, who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that who so ever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 16.

Q. What is the second article of your belief?

A. And in JESUS CHRIST his only SON, our LORD.

You have told me, how by the fin of Adam, fin first entered into the world; and how that all men having him for their first father, became sinners in him;

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him; and how death and mifery are come upon all men, because all have finned. So that man who is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble, Job xiv. 1. And through fear of death, is all his lifetime subject to bondage, Heb. ii. 15. And he may be justly punished with everlasting destruction, being become, by fin, a fit object of the wrath of God. the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 23. Had we not finned, and by fin fallen under the fentence of death, we had not stood in need of a Saviour to fave us from death. And bleffed be our gracious God, who hath shewn that he delights not in the death of a finner: Tho' man had by fin deferved the wages of fin, which is death; yet God to shew, that where fin abounded, grace did much more abound, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, Rom. v. 15. in him sent the free and undeserved gift of eternal life, and tendered it unto us. We had, I say, deserved to die, but God had never any pleasure in man's death; and therefore (as you have faid) as we all stand in need of a Saviour and Deliverer from death; so we have one, and here it comes to pass that we have one, even thro' the wonderful love and goodness of that same gracious God, and merciful Father, whom we by our fin had offended. O how great reason have we to love and obey so good a God, who thus loved us first? How can we chuse but serve him in love, with a most willing mind, and chearful spirit, who is all goodness, tender compassion, and love? He, when he was highly provoked to wrath, and might very justly have executed vengeance upon the finner, and have fent him to be punished everlastingly with the devil and his angels, to whose temptation, contrary to God's command, he had so easily yielded; yet would not do it: He not only spared his life by sin forfeited; but sent him eternal life from heaven, opening unto him a new, more easy and safe way to endless hap-G 4

piness, and putting it again in his power to be bleffed

for ever.

You say, That you believe in JESUS CHRIST, God's only SON, our LORD. So that you profess here to believe these four things, 1. That the Father hath given unto us sinners a JESUS. 2. That this same JESUS is CHRIST. 3. That he is the Father's ONLY SON. 4. That he is our LORD. I am now to try how you understand all this that you have said, and what reason you can give why you believe it.

Q. What doth the name 7 ESUS fignify?

A. JESUS fignifieth a Saviour; for he was called JESUS, because he was to save his people from their sins, and to deliver us from the wrath to come, Mat. i. 21. I Thess. i. 10.

Q. Can we be saved by none other but Jesus?

A. No; There is no salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, Acts iv. 12.

Q. Is Jesus able to save us?

A. Yes; He is able to fave them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, Heb. vii. 25.

Q. Is he also willing to save us?

A. Yes; For he came not to judge, or condemn the world; but to save it, John xii. 47. iii. 17.

Q By whom was he named JESUS?

At his circumcifion his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb, Luke ii. 21.

That we are to believe in the Son, as well as in the Father, we are taught in those words of his, Te betwee in God; believe also in me, John xiv. 1. As therefore it is your duty to believe in God the Father, so is it also your duty to believe in God the Son, even Jesus.

That there was such a person in the world born about seventeen hundred years ago, at that time when

Augustus

Augustus Cæsar was Emperor of Rome, and then well known by the name of JESUS, no man can doubt, that can think any credit is to be given to history, and hath read the history of those times. That this same person then born, and well known by that name, is indeed the JESUS or Saviour of sinners, is what you here profess to believe; and that you have good reason to believe it, you will, I hope, be convinced by what I am going to tell you concerning him; and this belief must needs be the strongest motive in the world to persuade you to love God, who in pure love, and tender mercy, sent us this Saviour

in our greatest need.

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When Moles begged of God to shew him his glory, God's answer to him was, That he would make all his goodness pass before him, and would proclaim the name of the Lord before him, Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. glory of God in his incomprehensible majesty, in his essential splendor and brightness, is a sight never to be feen by the weak eye of any mortal. The very fight would strike us dead. Yet is it said, That the Lord passed by him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, trangression and sin, and that will by no means clear (or as some think) clearly cut off, or immediately make an end of, the guilty, chap. xxxiv. 6. This then is the glory, this is the name of God, whereby he most delights to be known and glorified of men. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and be saved, 2 Pet. iii. 9. I Tim. ii. 4.

God therefore certainly foreseeing, what ill use Adam would make of his liberty, and of those excellent faculties which he would give him; how he would fin, and make himself an object of wrath; of his infinite goodness and mercy determined, that, notwithstanding this high provocation, he should not yet perish for want of a Saviour; but that he would

in the fulness of time, when he in his wisdom saw it fittest, send this very JESUS into the world to fave him. Hence we read, that according to the foreknowledge of God, according to the eternal purpose. which he purposed in Christ Fesus our Lord, Eph. iii. 11. that is, to fave finners by him; Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world, I Pet. i. 20. that is, to be the Saviour of finners. He chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we sould be boly, and without blame before him in love: baving predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Fesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and glory of his grace. wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. So that God faveth us, and calleth us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Fesus, before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9.

According to this eternal decree of God, when man had finned, he promifed a Saviour in the feed of the woman, in the feed of Abrabam, of the tribe of Fudab, of the root of Fesse, a son of David, pointing to him by the prophets, even till the fulness of time, that he fent him into the world, first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to seek and to save that which was loft, Like xix. 10. And the angel charged fofeph, his supposed father, that his name should be called 7 E SUS, for this reason, that be was to save his people from their fins. Mat. i. 21. You fee then, that tho' we are, because of sin, under the sentence of condemnation; vet our case is far from being desperate. God hath, in a wonder of condescending mercy, already provided a Saviour for us, even Jesus, in whom you do well to believe; for he that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of Q. You believe in Jesus CHRIST: What name

you by this word CHRIST?

A. CHRIST fignifieth one anointed, and is the interpretation of MESSIAS, Dan. ix. 25, 26. John i. 41.

Q. Is JESUS then the MESSIAS and CHRIST? A. Yes; He is Christ, the Son of the living God,

Mat. xvi. 16.

Q. Why do you believe him to be the CHR IST?

A. Because the Father, that sent him, hath borne witness of him, John viii. 18.

You have faid a great deal in few words, and that which all are greatly concerned to understand and believe. As the belief of a God is the foundation of all religion; fo to believe that JESUS is the CHRIST. is the prime fundamental article of the christian religion. It was therefore the chief business of the apostles, whom our Saviour sent into the world to preach his Gospel, to bring men to this belief, and to confirm them in it, as it was of St. Paul after his conversion. Three sabbath-days he reasoned with the Yews at Thessalonica out of the scriptures, shewing, that this same Fesus, whom he preached unto them, is Christ, Acts xvii. 2, 3. Thus also to the Tews at Corinth, he testified, that Jesus was Christ, chap. xviii. 5. And Apollos mightily convinced the Fews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures, That Fesus is Christ, ver. 28. And Saul confounded the Tews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ, chap. ix. 22.

The Jews, by the many predictions concerning Christ, which they had read in their own prophets, were fully satisfied, That God would send such a person among them; and by the writing of the same prophets, they generally expected, that this promised person should about that time come into the world. In God's sentencing of the serpent for beguiling Eve, was implied the promise of a Saviour, one that should destroy

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destroy the dominion of the devil, and that this Saviour should be one of the seed of the woman, Gen. iii. 15. It was not there told the world, of what nation. tribe or family he should be, after what manner, or when he should appear. Yet was this more particularly revealed by degrees afterwards; to Abraham especially: To him God promised more than once, and once he confirmed his promise by an oath; I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be bleffed, Gen. xiii. 3. xxii. 18. And this St. Paul calleth the preaching of the gospel to Abraham, affirming that that promised seed is Christ, Gal. iii. 8, 16. This covenant God established with Isaac, Gen. xvii. 21. And thus Isaac bleffed Facob, God Almighty give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, &c. chap. xxviii. 4. And Facob concerning the coming of Christ thus spake, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between bis feet, till Shilob come; and unto bim shall the gathering of the people be, Gen. xlix. 10. He was then, according to this prediction, to be of the tribe of Judah. Of this tribe was David the son of Fesse, to whom God sware, That he would establish his seed for ever, and build up his throne to all generations. To make him his first born, higher than the kings of the earth. That his seed should endure for ever, and his throne should be as the days of heaven, Pfal. lxxxix. 4, 27, 29, 36. The meaning of all which the prophet teacheth us, faying, Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon bis shoulder, and bis name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice, from henceforth even for ever, Isa. ix. 6, 7. And again, There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Fesse, and a branch shall grow out

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out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, &c. Isa. xi. 1, 2. In that day there shall be a root of fesse, which shall stand for an ensign to the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and it shall be glorious, ver. 10. Well, therefore said Zacharias, the father of the baptist, concerning this same Jesus, and that, when he was filled with the holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, God hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware unto our father Abraham, Luke i. 70.

Such a person then the Jews very reasonably expected to come, and good reason had they to expect him about that very time when he did come: For, as Jacob had prophesied, the government was not to depart from the Jews wholly till Shilob came. Now, tho Judah did continue a known tribe among the Jews, and of it were yet men famous, as Doctors or teachers of the law, yet the regal government was taken from them, and their power of government within themselves always more and more lessened; they might well therefore expect the coming of Shilob to draw

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The angel Gabriel had told Daniel that within such a certain number of years the Messias should both come, and be cut off, Dan. ix. 25, 26. Now these years drawing to an end, they had reason, according to Daniel's prophecy, to expect this coming of the Messias; as it is plain, that it was expected. Andrew having found Jesus, immediately runs to carry this good news, as of a thing much desired, to his brother Simon, saying, We bave found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ, John i. 41. As also Philip having been called by him, ran to tell Nathanael, saying, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Fesus

of Nazareth, ver. 25. Yea, the woman of Samaria could fay, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ, John iv. 45. Come, (faith she to the men of her city) see a man which told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ? ver. 29. Is not this that very Messias, who hath been so often promised, and is now so much expected? I believe that thou art Christ the Son of God, which should come into the world, said Martha, John xi. 27. Art thou be that should come, or look we for another? was the question which John's disciples were sent to ask him, Mat. 11. 3. One to come having been foretold, the Fews now expected him under the notion of him that should come. The scribes and learned Fews were well fatisfied in this, That Christ must come, and was to be the fon of David. How fay the fcribes, (faith Jefus) that Christ is the son of David? Mark xii. 35. What think ye of Christ? (faith he to the Pharisees) whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David, Mat. xxii. 42. Hath not the scripture said, (say the people) that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? John vii. 42.

Now, (faith St. Paul) Of this man's feed bath God, according to his promise, raised up unto Israel a Saviour Jesus, Acts xiii. 23. In almost all the prophets are to be found clear predictions of Christ's coming, many whereof I may afterwards have a fitter occasion to point out unto you. And this will be a very good reason for believing Jesus to be the Christ or Messias, who was to come; if in him it appear, that all things are fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him, Luke xxiv. 44. as I hope it will to them who without prejudice read the holy Scriptures. By these predictions God himself bare witness of him, teaching the world how and by what marks he might be known and discerned from other men, when he came.

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It is a matter of so great consequence, to believe that Jesus is the Christ, that the whole weight of our christian religion lieth upon it, so that (as you have heard) the prime work of the apostles was to lay this foundation surely. These things (St. John saith) were written, that men might believe, that fesus is the Christ, the Son of God, John xx. 31. And, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, I John v. 1. And, Who is a lyar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? I John ii. 22.

As therefore God bare witness to him by what his Holy Spirit in the prophets had faid of his person and coming, long before he came: So, now that he was come, God did, as it were, with his finger, point him out unto men, that they might view him well, and take special notice of him, as of that very person, concerning whom Moses and the prophets had faid so Therefore, before our Saviour manifested himself to the world, that men might have notice that he was at hand, and be prepared to receive him. John the baptist is sent by God as his immediate fore-runner to bid them make ready for him. had been also fore-told by the prophets, that they might take the more notice of it, when it happened: As in those words of the prophet, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make strait in the desert a high-way for our God, Ifa. xl. 3. Again, Behold, I will fend my mefsenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye feek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, Mal. iii. I. And thus spake the angel to Zacharias his father concerning him: He shall be filled with the holy Ghoft, even from his mother's womb. and many of the children of Ifrael shall be turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the (pirit spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and to make ready a people prepared

for the Lord, Luke i. 15, 16, 17.

Nor was Yohn only thus fent to point him out to the world, and for a witness, that all men thro' bim might believe, John i. 7. faying of him, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the fin of the world, ver. 29. But it pleased God also many other ways to testify of him. In the night wherein he was born, God fent his angel, attended with a multitude of the heavenly hoft, and the glory of God shining round about them, to proclaim the good news of his birth to certain shepherds that were watching their flocks by night; That unto them was then born, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, Luke After this by a star God directed wife men of the East, to the place where he was born, that there they might worship him, Mat. ii. 2.

When he was about thirty years of age, he was baptized of 70bn the baptist; and God opening the heavens, fent down the Holy Ghost, like as it had been a dove descending on him; and a voice came from heaven, which faid, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased, Luke iii. 21, 22. And afterwards, when on the mount he was transfigured before Peter, Fames and John, so that his face did shine as the fun, and his raiment was as white as the light, and Moses and Elias appeared talking with him, behold, a voice came out of a bright cloud, faying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;

hear ye him, Mat. xvii. 1, &c.

Over and above all this, The works which his Father gave him to finish, the same works bare witness of him, that the Father had sent him, John v. 36. Again, The works (faith he) which I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me, John x. 25. He was approved of God by miracles, and wonders, and figns, which God did by him, Acts ii. 22. When

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John sent two of his disciples to ask him that question. Art thou be that should come, or look we for another? it is faid, that in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave fight. And this he accounted a fufficient answer to their question, Go your way, (faith he) and tell John what things ye have feen and beard: The blind fee, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf bear, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached, Luke vii. 20, 21. And this must needs be enough to satisfy any one who confidereth how much these works exceeded the power of man; and also what is written by the propher, The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an bart, and the tongue of the dumb fing, &c. Ifa. xxxv. 5, 6.

By these wonderful works which he wrought, he was contented to be tried, whether he were the promised Messias or no. If I do not (faith he) the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, tho' ye believe not me, yet believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him, John x. 37, 38. They could not but acknowledge that fuch mighty works were done by him; he waved no opportunity of doing them openly, and in presence of the greatest multitudes. They were not done in a corner, Acts xxvi. 26. He turned the water into wine at a marriage feast, John ii. 9. He cast out the unclean devil in the fynagogue on the fabbath-day, Luke iv. 33. He recalled to life the widow's fon. in the presence of all that were accompanying him to his burial, Luke vii. 11. He twice fed some thoulands, with a few loaves, and yet left many baskets full of fragments, as John vi. 12. -- St. Peter very confidently told the Jews, that he did these things in the midst of them, as they themselves knew, Acts ii. 22. Thus he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed on him, John ii. 11. Neither they only, only, but many believed in his name, when they faw the miracles, John ii. 33. How could they excuse their unbelief, who heard him call forth Lazarus out of his grave, when he had lain four days buried? John xi. 43. Nicodemus, a pharifee and ruler, said, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles, which thou dost, except God be with him, John iii. 2. What do we? say the priests and pharisees, for this man doth many miracles; if we let him alone, all men will believe in him, John xi. 47. They that saw the miracle which he did in feeding such multitudes of people, with so small a number of loaves, said, This is of a truth that prophet which should come into the world, John vi. 14.

To add no more now: His doctrine and manner of teaching were so extraordinary, that the Jews his enemies, who had heard him, confessed, That never man spake like this man, John vii. 46. It is said, That they were assonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes, Mark i. 22. His word was with power, Luke iv. 32. They wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, ver. 22. Many of the Samaritans believed, because of his own word, saying, We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world, John iv. 41, 42.

A great deal more might have been faid on this subject; but this may suffice, I hope, at present, to confirm you in this faith, That JESUS is the CHRIST, or the person anointed to be the Sa-

viour of the world.

Q. Wherewith was he anointed?

A. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, Acts x. 39.

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There were divers forts both of persons and things of old, which were by God's appointment anointed with a precious oil or ointment, compounded and made

made of choice spices, as he had directed. And by this anointing of them, both fuch persons and things became thenceforward holy, that is, feparate and fet apart from all common uses, and consecrated unto some sacred use, or constituted in some place of power or dignity above others. With fuch ointments both kings, priests and prophets were (at least in some cases) anointed, or designed to their respective offices. Now the anointing of Jesus was to the office of mediator between God and men, and was not an anointing with any fort of material oil or ointment. It was altogether a spiritual unction. which the Pfalmift thus expresseth, saying, God, thy God, bath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, Plal. xlv. 7. That is, God the Father hath exalted thee far above all princes, and hath conferred upon thee all those divine gifts and graces, whereby thou art abundantly qualified, and every way fitted for that fingular honour of being the only Saviour of men, to the great joy of all thy faithful subjects and servants. The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him, as faith the prophet of him, and he of himself, because the Lord bad anointed bim to preach good things unto the meek. Ha. vi. 1. Luke iv. 18.

Q. Was Jesus a mediator between God and men?

A. Yes; The one mediator between God and man is the man Christ Jesus, 1 Im. ii. 5.

Q. What mean you by a mediator?

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A. By a mediator I mean a peace-maker, or reconciler, 2 Cor. v. 19. Rom. v. 1.

Q. On what terms bath he made peace?

A. He is the mediator of a new covenant, Heb. xii. 24.

That you may the better understand what this office of mediatorship is, unto which Christ is anointed, it is necessary that you bear in mind what before you were taught, concerning the state of sin and misery, into which mankind was fallen by breaking the law

of innocence. Man had broken the law of God his Maker, whom he knew to be his rightful and absolute Lord and Governor: And therefore, as he might give him whatever law he pleased to live by, supposing it only fuch as he had made him capable of keeping; so also might he make the penalty of breaking that law, whatsoever he saw in his wisdom fittest to keep men in their due obedience. The penalty threatened. was death, and by fin man had incurred this penalty, and it might have been immediately inflicted on him, if God had been pleased so to do. But God (as was faid) is not willing that any man perish. He will try him farther. He will therefore propound new terms of peace and reconciliation, and if men will Submit thereunto, they shall yet find mercy, and be restored to favour. He commits the whole affair unto his only begotten Son, and whatfoever terms he shall pitch upon for the making of a new covenage these God will accept of, and to these Men shall tied. How fit a person the bleffed Jesus was for this great work of mediation, what terms he hath fet, and what this new covenant is, will appear in what I have yet to teach you.

This is all that I defire of you to take notice of at present. That this new covenant is a covenant of grace, of God's free love and mercy to finners, in and through Jefus Christ. Tho' judgment was come upon all men to condemnation, Rom. v. 18. Tet the free gift, or grace, is come upon all men to justification of life. God is now pleased to pass by our fins, and to deal with us for the future, as tho' we had never finned, but were just persons. And being thus justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Fesus Christ, Rom. v. I. This is that state of falvation unto which your heavenly Father hath called you, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for which you are bound to return him all thanks and praise, as you are taught in your catechism. The God of all grace bath called us unto his eternal glory

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by Christ Fesus, I Pet. v. 10. By him we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2. Unto this state of falvation and grace are we called by the gospel, Acts xx. 24 wherein the grace of God bath appeared to us, bringing salvation, Tit. ii. 11. That in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, (even us Gentiles dead in trespasses and sins) through fesus Christ. For by grace are we faved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 5, 7, 8. We believe that through the grace of our Lord Fefus Christ, we shall be saved, Acts xv. 11. In short, all good bleffings are ascribed to the grace of God. through our Lord Jesus Christ. And hence our prayers and praises are to be offered unto God. through Jesus Christ only, and we cannot hope to be accepted of God, but as we are in him. And if God bath faved us, and called us with an boly calling, it is not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Fesus, before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. God our Father bath loved us, and bath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, 2 Thef. ii. 16.

Q. You say, you believe in JESUS CHRIST his only SON. Whose only Son is he?

A. He is the only begotten Son of God, John iii. 18.

Q. Is he so the Son of God, as that he is indeed God?

A. Yes, He is over all, God bleffed for ever, Rom. ix. 5.

You say right. The holy angel, who was sent to his mother to foretel her of his conception, told her, That that holy thing which should be born of her should be called the Son of God, Luke i. 35. And this was well known to be one of the titles of the Messias H 3 which

Rabbi, (faid Nathanael) which was to come. thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Ifrael. John i. 49. I adjure thee by the living God, (faid the high-priest) that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God, Matt. xxvi. 63. And he was not only titularly, but really the Son of God. Nor is he called fo, as I told you the holy angels were, by reason of their ministry next under God; or as Adam is supposed to be, because of his being made by God in his own image or likeness; or as the children of Seth, and all the true worshippers of God, to distinguish them from the wicked, who are the children of the devil; or as all that receive Christ by faith; or as all they that are led by the Spirit of God, Rom. viii. 14. by adoption and grace. All fincere godly persons are God's children by regeneration, or their new and spiritual birth. But Jesus is God's Son in a most singular manner, so as none other ever was before him, neither ever shall be; the Son of God, that is, by a true, but by an ineffable generation. Therefore is he called the only, and only begotten Son of God, John iii. 16, 18. The only begotten of the Father, John i. 14.

You do well also to believe, that this only begotten Son of God, is God, of the fame nature with the Father, whose Son he is. He is not one of the many who are called gods and lords, but are not fo unless by the help of a figure; he is not a nominal God only, and not really and truly fo; or truly fo only by office and delegation, and not by nature (as some do very earnestly at this time contend to make him, against the constantly received faith of the catholick church of Christ); but he is in very deed, and by nature, very God of very God, begotten, but not made: He is God the Son, the only begotten of God the Father, of one and the fame divine nature, one and the fame God. I and my Father (faith he) are one, John x. 30. He that hath feen me, hath fren the Father, faith he to Philip, Tohn

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John xiv. 10. I am in the Father, and the Father in

me, ver. II.

That he is truly and effentially God, is either plainly taught us in the holy scriptures, or they teach us nothing at all plainly, but we are left to guess only at the plainest sense that can be supposed to be in words. The scriptures seem at least to affirm him to be really God, in words as plain, as if they were picked out on purpose, that we should not be able to fasten any other meaning on them. What then could the meaning of the Holy Ghost be in the choice of such expressions, if he would not have us to understand by them what they most properly fignify? Let them who deny Jesus to be really God, consider what an useless thing they make the word of God to be, and what a dishonour they do to the Holy Ghost, that any one may interpret the words of both, even in the prime articles of the christian faith, to what fense he likes best: Where it is said, That be is over all, God bleffed for ever, Amen, Rom. ix. 5. is not the glory due to God only, given to Jesus Christ? Nothing greater can be faid of God than this, That be is over all, God bleffed for ever: By this is the Creator distinguished from all creatures, that he is blessed for ever, Amen, Rom. i. 25. And this was the idolarry of the heathen world, that they worshipped the creatures more than the Creator: Either then Jesus Christ is the true God, and then indeed is this glory due unto him; or he is but a creature, and then will all christians be found guilty of that idolatry, whereof the heathens were very justly accused: But we need not fear to be charged with idolatry for worshipping of him, of whom it is said, This is the true God, and eternal life, I John v. 20. And immediately it follows, Little children, keep yourselves from idols, Amen. ver. 21. We may then worship Christ, and keep ourselves from idols, because he is the true God. God will not give his glory to another. Isai. xlii. 8. Yet is it his will, that men should bonour the H 4 Son.

Son, even as they bonour the Father, John v. 23. If then the Son be not God, he hath given his honour to another. It is commanded, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, Phil. ii. 10. And, when he, that is, God, bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he the same God saith, and let all the angels of God worship him, Heb. i. 6. And of them, and the saints with them, it is said, thus they worshipped him, saying, Blessing, and bonour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever, Rev. v. 13. We must then either grant, that the Son is by nature God, or that the christian church is guilty of heathenish idolatry; that is, of doing service to that which by nature is no God. For this is it wherewith

the heathens are charged, Gal. iv. 8. Of the bleffed Jesus it is said again, That being in the form of God, be thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6. Yet must it needs be very hard to conceive, how he should be equal with God, and not be God. He is by St. John, (for some special reasons, occasioning the writing both of his gospel and epiftles) frequently called the WORD. And of him he thus writeth. In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God, John i. 1. And to shew that by God he meant the true God, and properly so called, he faith, That all things were made by bim, and that without him was not any thing made, that was made, ver. 3. He was then no creature, for all things that are made, that is, all creatures, were made by him; and if he was a creature, or made, he must make himself, that is, he must be, and act before he had a being; for without him was not any thing made that was made. The creation of the world according to St. Paul, is a clear proof of the eternal Power and godhead of God, Rom. i. 20. If then by Christ all things were made, then is this a clear proof of the eternal power and godhead of Christ. But by bim

were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him. And be is before all things, and by him all things consist, Col. i. 15. &c. And again, God bath in thefe last days spoken unto us by his Son, by whom also be made the worlds, Heb. i. 2. Unto the Son, He, that is, God, faith, Thou, Lord, in the beginning bast laid the foundation of the earth, and the beavens are the works of thy bands, ver. 10. He is called the mighty God, the everlafting Father, Ifai. ix. 6. My Lord, and my God, as Thomas called him, John xx. 28. The Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Isai. xl. 3. To omit the rest, He is that Jehovah, who, for their tempting of him in the wilderness, sent fiery serpents among them, Numb. xxi. 6. compared with I Cor. x. 9. Isaias faw his glory, when he faw Febovab fitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, with his train filling the temple, Isai. vi. 1. with Fobn xii. 41. Thus faid he of himself, Before Abraham was, I AM, which he could no otherwise be, but as he was the eternal God, John viii. 58. Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, which is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty, Rev. i. 8. Who came down from heaven, and yet whilft on earth, is in heaven, John iii. 13. I will not now add any more to prove the divinity of our Saviour, which is both fo fully and so plainly taught in scripture, that it seems very wonderful, how any one can have the face to deny it, and yet at the same time hold the scripture to be the rule of faith. This would almost tempt one to think, that fuch persons are not christians indeed, but being a little ashamed to own themselves Atheists, or Theists, only borrow the names of Arians, or Socinians, to pass undiscovered, though under the difguise of a sect, chusing rather to be thought Hereticks than Infidels. Let us take heed how

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how we believe in a Christ, that is not God, lest we believe in a Christ that cannot be our Saviour.

Q. You say that Christ is the Son of God, and God: Is be not the Son of man?

A. Yes, so he often calleth himself.

Q. Is be truly man?

A. Yes, he is the man Christ Jesus, I Tim. ii. s.

Q. Is be then both God and man?

A. Yes, he is God manifested in the slesh, I Tim. iii. 16.

Q. Which is the third article of your belief?

A. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born

of the virgin Mary.

6. In this article you profess to believe, that the fame Jesus Christ, who is God's only Son, was made man; and that he was made man after a most wonderful manner, whereby it appeared that he was no ordinary man. His mother was a pure virgin, who never knew man: Of his birth, the prophet long before thus spake; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel, Ifai. vii. 14. Which name Immanuel, being interpreted, is, God with us, or in our nature, Matt. i. 23. Now, when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth bis Son made of a woman, Gal. iv. 4. So according to the first promise, he was properly the feed of a woman, a woman that knew not a man, but was a pure virgin, Luke i. 34. Only she was espoused to a man, whose name was foseph, of the house and lineage of David, ver. 27. For, as you were told before, the Messias was to be of the house of David. This virgin's name was Mary, Luke i. 27. And before they came together, she was found with child by the Holy Ghost, Matt. i. 18. according to the prediction of the angel, The Holy Gbost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee; therefore also that boly thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, Luke i. 35. And when the days were accomplished, she brought forth ber first-born son, Luke ii. 6, 7.

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ii. 6, 7. And this she did in Betblehem, the city of David, ver. 4. according to the prophecy, Thou Bethlehem Ephrata, the thou he little among the thou-sands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, Micah

v. 2, &c.

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By this that hath been faid, you may eafily perceive, that no person could be better fitted for the office of a mediator, to make reconciliation and peace between God and men, and to fet the terms of a new covenant between them, than the Son of God. For being eternally God, we may be fure, he would confult and provide for the honour of the Father in the first place, and take care of the honour of his government above all things, which he himself understood better, and was concerned in more than any other. And then, left men should fear he should be partial, and too hard upon them through zeal for his father's glory, he voluntarily humbled himfelf, by affuming our nature to be made our brother. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also bimself took part of the same, Heb. ii. 14. Hereby he became experimentally sensible of the infirmities of our nature, and of the dangers we are in because of temptation, and in what need we fland daily of mercy, and affifting grace; and we may affure ourselves, that as he would on the one hand provide for the honour of God his Father, fo on the other hand he would provide for all our needs, whom he is not ashamed to call his brethren. The WORD was made flesh, and dwelt, or tabernacled, among us, John i. 18. He empired himself, and made himself of no reputation; he took upon him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, Phil. ii. 7. His fitness to be our mediator, will be the better understood by considering the offices which, as a mediator, he was to undertake; that is, of a propher, of a prich, and of a king.

108 The Scripture Catechift; or,

Q. Was Jesus a prophet?

A. Yes, He was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people, Luke xxiv. 19.

He was so indeed, mighty in word, or in preaching the truth of God; and mighty in deed, confirming the truth of his doctrine, by his mighty and wonderful works. The office of a prophet was not only to foretel future things, as God gave them command; but to be an interpreter of the mind of God to men, and to declare unto them his will; and withal to affure them, by good evidences, that God had sent him with a commission to do this; and that he ran not of his own head before he was sent, or spake his own dreams and visions, saying, Thus saith the Lord, as you find the salse and lying prophets were wont to do: Such a prophet we stood in great need of because of our ignorance, and the cunning crastiness of the malicious devil, who will never be

without many arts of deceiving us.

Now, had God himself immediately after our offences, many and great, committed against him, come to treat with us, the conscience of our guilt would have made us, like Adam in the garden, afraid of him, and through fear to have fled from him; or like the Israelites at the giving of the law from mount Sinai, cry out, Let not God speak with us, lest we die, Exod. xx. 19. Yea, the appearance of an angel or spirit, is now become a terrible thing to us. mediator therefore of the new covenant, first took our nature unto him, that as a prophet coming to treat with us in the name of God, he might the more familiarly converse with us. Now, as he was a prophet, it was his business to make us fensible of our present miserable state, and the great danger we were in of perishing everlastingly; to unriddle and explain unto us the mysteries of the law, and the true meaning of those darker promises, types, shadows, and prophecies of the old testament. instruct us in the true nature of God, and in the right

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right way of worshipping him in spirit and truth: To make us know, what's God's gracious will concerning us, how ready and willing he is to be reconciled unto us, and by what means we may be reconciled unto him: Thus, I say, to declare the mind of God unto

men, is the office of a prophet.

That the Fews did expect the coming of fuch a prophet, and that the Messias, when he came, was to do this work of a prophet, and that some of them were convinced, that Jesus was that prophet, is plain enough, from what, on fundry occasions, is told us. This is of a truth (fay the Fews) that prophet which should come into the world; not only a prophet, but that very prophet whom they expected, and believed should come, John vi. 14. They, at the first appearance of John the Baptist, supposed he might be the man. Art thou (fay they) that prophet? And why baptizest thou, if thou be not that prophet? John i. 21, 25. But afterward, they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us, and God bath visited his people, Luke vii. 16. Neither did they expect fuch a prophet without good reason for it: for their great prophet Moses had foretold them of him. A prophet shall the Lord thy God raise up unto thee, from the midst of thy brethren, like unto me: Unto him ve shall hearken, Deut. xviii. 15. Acts vii. 37. iii. 22.

Now the first business of a prophet being (as was before said) to make known unto men the things of God, who could be so sitted for this great work, as the Son of God? Who can declare the Father and his counsel so well unto the world, as the SON, which is the bosom of the FATHER? John i. 18. He therefore came in his Father's name, John v. 42. And He and his Father are one, John x. 30. I (saith he) am the light of the world; he that solloweth me, shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of life, John viii. 12. To whom shall we go? (saith St. Peter) thou hast the words of eternal life? John vii.

68. Presently after he had been baptized of John, the Spirit, after a visible manner, descended upon him, Luke iii. 22. And having been led into the wilderness, and there tempted of the devil, and having bassled him in all his temptations; be came in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and taught in their synagogues, Luke iv. 14, 15. And in Nazareth, the book of Isaiah was delivered to him, as he stood up in the synagogue to read; and he found in it these words, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, &c. Luke iv. 18. And he said, This day is this scripture

fulfilled in your ears, ver. 21.

This office of a prophet he executed partly by himself in person, and partly by others. He taught not only his felect disciples and apostles privately, whom he defigned for his ministers in this office of teaching the world; but also the whole multitude, as he could have opportunity, both in the fynagogues and elsewhere. He spake openly to the world; he over taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the fews always resorted, and in secret said he nothing, John xviii. 20. To the same end of teaching the world, he trained up the twelve apostles, and other feventy disciples, and fent them abroad to gather disciples, and furnished them with such powers and gifts of the Holy Ghost, as were necessary for the work they were employed in by him; which himfelf had begun, and they were to carry on in his name, and by virtue of his presence with them, to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. As a prophet, he came to call, or invite finners to repentance, Matt. ix. 13. And to bring life and immortality to light through his gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10. And it was his will, That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, Luke xxiv. 47. As he himself had begun, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of beaven is at band, Matt. iv. 17. Repent ye, and believe the gospel, Mark i. 15. And accordingly

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accordingly they went out and preached, that men

should repent, Mark vi. 12.

And to convince the world of the truth of what he preached, he wrought abundance of miracles, demonstrating thereby, that he came forth from God to reform the wicked world, and to turn men into the ready way to falvation, as you have heard before. Nor did he only fuch wonderful works himfelf, as carried on them all the marks of a divine power; but he also communicated the same powers to others. who were to minister under him in his prophetick office; to whom also he gave authority to ordain others to the fame ministry as there was need of them, and to bestow on them, by the laying on of their hands, the same gifts of the Holy Ghost. that believeth on me, (faith he) the works that I do. shall be do also, and greater works than these shall be do, because I go to my Father, John xiv. 2. Christ himself was to leave the world, and go to his Father; but some he must leave behind him to preach the gospel, where he had not preached it; and they must be impower'd to do such works as might win credit to their doctrine: And he now returning to his Father would fend down the Holy Ghost, that he might enable them to do whatever should be needful to that end. These signs (faith he) shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils, (as St. Paul did, Acts xvi. 18.) They Shall speak with new tongues, (as the apostles did on the day of Pentecost. Acts ii. 4.) They Shall take up serpents, (as St. Paul did, Acts xxviii. 5.) And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not burt them. They shall lay hands on the fick, and they shall recover, as Acts xxviii. 8, &c. Men brought forth the fick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by, might over-shadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto ferusalem, bringing sick folks, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were bealed

every one, Acts v. 15, 16. God wronght special miracles by the bands of Paul also, so that from his body were brought unto the sick bandkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them, Acts xix, 11, 12. This power of working miracles for the conviction of unbelievers did for some ages, as histories inform us, continue in the church, and especially in those parts of the world which were wholly under the government of heathen rulers.

Moreover, our bleffed Jesus (as also were his apostles) was, as the great prophet of God, the most illustrious example to the world, of all manner of virtue and goodness, and most perfectly by his life and death did he exemplify that heavenly doctrine which he preached. Where was there ever feen fuch a glorious example of true and unaffected piety, devotion, zeal, and a total refignation to the will of God, whose will to do was his meat and drink? Or of pure love, charity, mercy, and good will towards men? Or of prudence, fortitude, temperance, humility, meekness, patience, and self-denial? Finally, having lived in the constant practice of that most heavenly doctrine which he taught, he fealed to the truth of it with his own most precious blood. thus (faith the apostle) God bath reconciled us to himfelf by Fesus Christ, and bath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and bath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 18, &c.

Q. Which is the fourth article?

A. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell.

Q. Who was this Pontius Pilate?

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A. He was the governor of Judea under Tiberius Casar, the then Roman emperor, Luke iii. 1.

Q. By whom was Jesus brought before the Roman

governor?

A. The chief priests and elders of the fews delivered him to Pilate the governor, Matt. xxvii. 2.

Q. What did they accuse bim of?

A. Of sedition and treason, Luke xxiii. 3, 5.

Q. Was he found guilty of these crimes?

A. No, Pilate found no fault in him, ver. 4.

Q. Did be not then set bim at liberty?

A. No; but delivered him to the foldiers, who cru-cified him, Matt. xxvii. 24, 35.

Q. Did be die on the cross?

A. Yes; He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 8.

Q. Died be for any fin of his own?

A. No; he did no fin, I Pet. ii. 22.

Q. Did be not die for fin?

A. Yes; He once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Q. For whose fins died he?

A. He bare our fins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Q. Died be for all men?

A. Yes; He gave bimself a ransom for all, I

Q. What became of bim after he was dead?

A. He was buried as the manner of the Jews is to bury, I Cor. xv. 4. John xix. 40.

Q. Did be descend into bell?

A. Yes, But his soul was not left in bell, neither did his flesh see corruption, Acts ii. 26. 31.

Dur blessed Jesus, as a prophet, came to shew us a new way to everlasting life and blessedness. Nor did he only in his doctrine teach us, which is that way; but he himself walked before us in it, that so in our constant walking after his example, and tread-

ing in his steps, who is the way, the truth, and the life, John xiv. 6. we may be fure that we are always right. And he not only went about doing good. Acts x. 38. and in all the cities and villages teaching in their fynagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every fickness, and every difease among the people, Mat. ix. 35. but he also set himself forth to the world as the most perfect pattern. and great exemplar, to form mens lives by; and that more especially in all those noble and divine virtues, which it is always hardest for corrupt and weak flesh and blood to learn. If we will be faved by him, we must also be ready to suffer with him: and must ourselves walk even as he also walked. 1 70hn ii. 6. bearing his cross, and following him; the whole course of whose life, upon earth, was all humiliation. And he suffered for sin, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; who did no fin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when be was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, be threatned not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, I Pet. ii. 21, &c. He made bimself of no reputation, but took upon bim the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 7. He came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, Mat. xx. 28. washed the feet of his disciples, John xiii. 5. saying, If I your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do, as I have done He was indeed (as by the prophet it was foretold that he should be) despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was oppressed, and afflicted, yet be opened not his mouth; as a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened he not his mouth, Isa. liii. 3, 7. He underwent with all chearfulness, all the innocent infirmities of human nature. He condescended to be born of obscure parents, and in a stable belonging to an inn, to be laid in a manger, €3c.

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&c. Luke ii. 7. He was persecuted by Herod when an infant; and Foseph, to save his life, was by an angel warned to flee with him into Egypt, Mat. ii. 13. He fuffered hunger, and thirst, and weariness; was led into the wilderness, and was there with the wild beafts, and was tempted of the devil, Mat. iv. John iv. Mark i. 12. After many other troubles, he was betrayed by Judas, one of his twelve apostles, into the hands of finners; and in the garden was in fo bitter an agony, that his fweat was, as it were, great drops of blood; his foul was exceeding forrowful, even unto death. He was led to Caiaphas the high-priest, where false-witnesses came in against him. and where he was most vilely and contemptuously entreated. Then was he delivered to Pilate the Roman governor, and by him he was fent to Herod, who, after he had moked him, fent him back again to Pilate, who, to please the fews, tho he had found no fault in him, ordered him to be crucified. Then the foldiers in mockery put on him a fearlet robe, set a crown of thorns upon his head, put a reed into his right-hand instead of a sceptre, and bowed theknee in derision before him, saying, Hail, king of They spit upon him, and smote him on the head with a reed, and crucified him, as one of the vilest malefactors, between two thieves. See Mat. xxvi. and xxviii. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. John xix. I shall add no more of his sufferings, considering him only as a man; but exhort with St. Paul, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Fesus, Phil. ii. 5.

Q. Was Fesus a priest?

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A. Yes; He is a priest for ever, called of God an high-priest, after the order of Melchisedec, Heb. v. 6, 10.

Q. Who was this Melchisedec?

A. King of Salem, priest of the most High God, Heb. vii. 1.

Q. What was the high-priest's office?

A. Every high-priest taken from among men is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and facrifices for sins, Heb. v. 1.

Q. What sacrifice for sins did Christ offer?

A. Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away fin by the facrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26.

You have before heard, how that because of our ignorance, we stood in need of a teacher to be sent from God, to instruct us in his nature, and his will, and to shew us how, and upon what conditions such sinners as we are, might yet be reconciled unto him, and restored to his favour. And you have heard how Jesus was sent to declare unto us his Father's will concerning us, what he hath done for us, and what he expects from us, and for this, is truly called

a prophet.

Now, because we are all finners, and liable to condemnation, and must perish without a pardon; and it feems to be very reasonable, that some satisfaction should be given to God, as our righteous governor, for our wilful rebellion against his just laws, before we have any encouragement given us, to hope for a pardon; feeing that to pardon rebels without any fatisfaction given either by themselves, or some other for them, feems little less, than to encourage them to rebel again; we stand in need of an high-priest, whose office it is to intercede with God on our behalf, and to offer unto God some sacrifice of atonement and propitiation, such as God would be pleased to accept of, and declare himself satisfied with. And because our blessed Jesus hath undertaken to do this, therefore is he an high-priest. Such an one it was foretold that the Messias should be. David calling him his Lord, thus prophefied concerning him, The Lord bath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec, Pial.

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The legal priesthood was entailed on Aaron and his fons, who were of the tribe of Levi; these God had chosen and consecrated to his service and folemn worship, instead of the first-born of the children of Israel. But the Messias was promised as one of another tribe, even of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood, Heb. vii. 14. He was to be a royal priest, or both king and priest in one person, which Aaron never was; so that Christ must be a priest of another order, and not of that legal order whereof Aaron was the first and chief. From the beginning, before the law was given, there had been another order; for the firstborn or eldest in every tribe and family, was to the whole family both king and priest; and such an one was Melchisedec, long before the law, even in the days of Abraham, king of Salem, and priest of the most High God, Gen. xiv. 18. So the name imports, and title annexed unto it, Melchisedec fignifying, king of righteousness, or righteous king; and king of Ferusalem, which is called Salem, Psal. ixxvi. 2. being king of peace, Heb. vii. 2. So that he was a fit type of Christ, who bringeth both righteoutness and peace to men, or who by his own fulfilling of all righteousness made mens peace with God. Lastly, This Melchisedec is said to be a priest There is no account given us by Moses of the genealogy of this man, nor any mention at all made in the scripture of his parentage, of any one to whom he fucceeded in the priesthood, or of any one that succeeded him, when he was born, or when he died; therefore is he faid to be without father or mother, or descent, having neither beginning, nor end of days, Heb. vii. 3. That is, none of these things being mentioned in the scripture, Melchisedec is here confidered as an everlasting priest, and herein was a type of Christ, who indeed had neither predecessor nor fuccessor in his priesthood, but hath an endless priesthood; being made an high-priest, not after 1 3

the law of a carnal commandment, which made men that died, (as did Aaron and his fons) high-priests; but after the power of an endless life, ver. 16, &c.

It belonged to the priest's office to offer facrifice for fin. And Christ did this once for all in the end, or last age of the world, to put away fin by the sa-

crifice of himfelf, Heb. viii. 3.

By the law of Moses there were some fins which admitted of no atonement by facrifice, but the finner himself was to suffer death for his sin. Other sins there were, for the atonement whereof, a facrifice might be accepted as a legal propitiation for him, who otherwise must have been put to death for his fin. Such offenders were to bring fuch a creature as the law required, and to offer it unto God for their fin, by offering it to the priest. And then laying their hands upon it, and confessing that they themselves had deserved to die, and that it was their defire, that all their fins might be laid on the head of that creature, the priest slew it, and did with it, as God in the law had commanded him, and so the blood and life of it was accepted for the life and blood of the offender. Hence said God to the Israelites, I have given the blood to you upon the altar, to make atonement for your fouls, or lives, Lev. xvii. 11. And, faith the apofile to the Hebrews, Without Shedding of blood there is no remission, Heb. ix. 22. Among these facrifices for fin, there was one more especial and remarkable one, which none could offer but the high-priest only, and that but once in the year, on the great day of atonement, or expiation, Lev. xvi. 34. 7. On this day only he entered into the Holy of Holies, or holiest of all, not without some of the blood of the facrifice, which he there fprinkled before the mercy-feat, to make atonement both for his own fins, and for the fins of the people.

Now, all the facrifices for fin, and amongst them this last, more especially on the day of atonement, were figures and shadows of that one great sacrifice len

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of our Lord Christ, of himself for the sins of the The things then facrificed, were not whole world. things in themselves, and for any real goodness or worth in them, acceptable to God, nor fufficient to atone and make fatisfaction for the least fin that ever was committed against the divine Majesty. It is impossible, that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away fins, Heb. x. 4. Both gifts and facrifices were offered by the law, but such they were, as could not make him that did the service perfect, as appertaining to the conscience, Heb. ix. o. They were all of them but typical, and shadows for the present time; and the blood of these bulls and goats, or the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh only, ver. 13. That is, those legal facrifices, and purifications, could free thefe finners and unclean persons from a legal punishment. or a legal uncleanness; but they could not by any of these alone be acquitted in their conscience, and before God. The law, that is, the ceremonial law, bad but a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, nor the things in subflance and reality; it had a shadow of the body, but not the very body itself, and therefore could never by those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect, Heb. x. 1.

Jesus himself was that great high-priest, of whom the legal high-priests were but types; and his great sacrifice offered by him once for all, was presigured and shadowed by all the legal sacrifices which they offered; and hence, when the sacrifice, which they fore-signified, was offered, when the substance and body signified was come, the signs fore-signifying its coming, must needs become useless; they therefore all then ceased of themselves, and were at an end for ever. The apostle from the psalmist, (Psal. xl. 6.) thus speaketh of this matter: When he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; in burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin, thou hadst

no pleasure (which were offered by the law); then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; a body hast thou prepared me. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second, Heb. x. 5, &c. And now, we are santtified by the offering of this body of

Christ once for all, ver. 10.

The facrifice to be offered for fin by the law of Moses, was to be without blemish, Lev. xxii. 20. And Jesus, the lamb of God, that taketh away the fins of the world, was a lamb without blemish, and without spot, I Pet. i. 19. And as he was to be our high-priest, In all things it behaved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the fins of the people; for in that be bimself bath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 17, 18. We have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without fin, Heb. iv. 15. Without fin, I fay, For such an high-priest became us, who is boly, barmless, separate from sinners, made bigher than the beavens, who needeth not daily, as those high priests under the law, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people, Heb. vii. 26, 27. Being God, he must be without fin; and being man, he was subject to infirmity. Being God, he was faithful to God; and being man, he was merciful to his brethren. And the facrifice which he offered unto his Father, to render him propitious to us, was worthy of his acceptance, and of infinite value, for it was the blood of him that is God, called therefore God's own blood, Atts xx. 28. The facrifice was himself, who thro' the eterial Spirit offered bimself, without spot to God, to purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God, Heb. ix. 14.

By this facrifice of himself, our blessed Jesus gave full satisfaction to God's justice for us and our sins.

He gave bimself for our sins, Gal. i. 4. He came to give his life a ransom for many, Mat. xx. 28. He gave his flesh for the life of the world, John vi. 51. He who knew no fin, was made fin, (that is, a facrifice for fin, or a fin-offering) for us, 2 Cor. v. 21. By the grace of God he was to take of death for every man, Heb. ii. 9. He gave bimself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling favour, Eph. v. 2. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. He is the propitiation for our fins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, I John ii. 2. He was once offered, to bear the fins of many, Heb. ix. 28. He was wounded for our transgressions, be was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The Lord bath laid on him the iniquity of us all, Isa. liii. 5, 6. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, I Pet. ii. 24. He made him to be fin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21.

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Take heed of them, who tell you, that men are not to be justified and faved by Christ, who suffered at Ferusalem, or by the sufferings of Christ on the cross; but by the sufferings of a Christ within them. And beware also of them who teach you, that Christ was not truly and properly a priest offering any facrifice of atonement for our fins, or that he died a true propitiatory facrifice, or made satisfaction for the fins of the world; but to confirm the truth of his doctrine, and to give us an example of fuffering, and of patient submission to the will of God; this indeed he did, but not this only; for he died a ransome, a propitiation, a price of redemption; and to give unto God all that he was pleased to demand for our pardon, and peace, and reconciliation; and whatever might at once best serve to set forth the greatness of God's mercy in receiving rebels to mercy.

and to fecure withal the honour of his just and righteous government.

Q. What's the fifth article of your belief?

A. The third day he rose again from the dead.

Q. How did that appear?

A. He shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, Alls i. 3.

Q. Did Christ die any more?

A. No; Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him, Rom. vi. 9.

This article of the refurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, is a principal article of the christian faith. On the truth of this one article depends all our faith and hope, as we are christians. This therefore was a principal part of the apostle's business to confirm men in. When Judas was, by his betraying his master, fallen from his apostleship, St. Peter declared it necessary to chuse another in his room, and to add him to the number of the eleven remaining, for this reason here expressed. Of these men which bave accompanied with us, (faith he) all the time that the Lord Fesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection, Acts i. 21. Whereof (faith he) we are witnesses, chap. ii. 31. And with great power gave the apostles witness of his resurr ection, chap. iv. 33.

And indeed the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead, as it is the greatest of all the miracles which he did; so is it that on which our faith in him, as the Christ, and in the merit and virtue of his sufferings and death for our salvation, is principally founded. For who can possibly take a dead man to be his Saviour from death? If he did neither keep himself from dying, nor shew himself alive again after his death; how should we believe him to be the giver

of eternal life? Nay, feeing that before his death, he had promifed to rife again within three days, and had thereby put his followers into a longing expectation to fee this promife verified; if he did not indeed rife again according to his promile, all men would think they had cause sufficient to distrust him in all that he had taught them. But now, by his refurrection from the dead, God the Father hath abundantly certified the world, that he is fully satisfied with what his beloved Son hath fuffered for the fins thereof. and that his wrath towards us is appealed by the facrifice of his death. And we may be well affured, that by the death he underwent, for our fins, be bath destroyed bim that had the power of death, that is, the devil, Heb. ii. 14. Seeing God hath raised him up, baving loofed the pains of death, because it was impossible be should be bolden of it, Acts ii. 14. Hath given bim the keys of death and bell, Rev. i. 18. we may be fure, that tho' he was made of the feed of David according to the flesh, yet he was sufficiently declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 3, 4.

If Christ be not risen, (saith St. Paul) then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ. If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins. They also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished, I Cor. xv. 14. xvii. 18. Indeed the gospel of Christ is all but a

fable, if Christ be not risen again.

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But, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, I Pet. i. 3. Evidence of which important truth, we have as much and good, as such a matter is capable of. For, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, Luke xxiv. 46. He

rose again the third day according to the scriptures. I'Cor. xv. iv. David being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of bis loins according to the flesh, be would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before. spake of the resurrection of Christ, Saying, That his foul was not left in bell, neither did his flesh see corruption, Pfal, xvi. 10. Acts ii. 30, 31. Thus also faid another prophet, When thou shalt make his foul, or life, an offering for sin, be shall see bis seed, be shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his band, Isa. liii. 10. Of his own refurrection he himself foretold the Fews, though they would not understand him: Destroy (faith he) this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again. John ii. 19. He spake of the temple of bis body, ver. 21. Again, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the bands of finners, and they shall kill bim, and the third day be shall be raised again, Mat. xvii. 22. XX. 18.

And as he had foretold, so it came to pass. Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, (saith St. Peter) who did eat and drink with him, after he rose from the dead, Acts x. 40, 41. So saith St. Paul, He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of above sive hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asseptions, and last of all he was seen of me also, I Cor. xv.

I shall need to say no more of this point, but that you find the whole history of our Saviour's resurrection, Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. Luke xxiv. John xx. xxi. All which chapters you should do well to read so often till you have them by heart. Next remember how he promised, that after he was risen from the dead, he would send the promise of his Father upon his disciples; and commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem, un-

til they were endued with power from on high, Luke xxiv. 49. Telling them, that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days after. Acts i. 5. Accordingly, on the day of Pentecost, when people were come together from all quarters to that feaft. they were all filled with the Holy Ghoft, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, Acts ii. 4. And they went forth, and preached every-where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with figns following, Mark xvi. 20. God giving testimony to the word of his grace, by granting figns and wonders to be done by their hands, Acts xiv. 3. How could Jesus have made good this promise, had he not risen from the dead? But all this was well enough known among the people, and could not be denied; and yet no better evidence can there be of his refurrection than this. for the faith of the universal Church, that is abundantly evidenced by the observation of Easter, and of the Lord's day weekly, in remembrance of the refurrection of our Lord.

O. Rebearse the fixth article of your creed.

A. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right-hand of God the Father Almighty.

O. What mean you by the right-hand of God?

A. I mean the power of God, and the majesty on high, Luke xxii. 69. Heb. i. 3.

In the holy and bleffed Jesus, after his resurrection from the dead, was seen of his apostles, conversing with them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3. And giving them commission to preach unto all nations, and to baptize, not Jews only, but all forts of people that believed what they preached unto them, for the advancement of that kingdom, Matt. xxviii. 19. And also a power of remitting and returning sins, John xx. 23. Having thus given commandment to his apostles, be led them forth as far as to Bethany, and

be lift up bis hands, and bleffed them; and it came to pals while be bleffed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into beaven, Luke xxiv. 50. A cloud received bim out of their fight, Acts i. 9. afcention of our bleffed Saviour into heaven, was, as it were, his triumphing after his victory on the cross over death and hell, and all the powers of the devil. Ascending up on high, (saith the apostle) be led captivity captive, and, as conquerors were wont to do in their triumphs, be gave gifts unto men, Eph. iv. 8. Now that he ascended, what is it but that be also descended first, into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all beavens, that he might fill all things, ver 9, 10. He had descended first into the lower parts of the earth, whereby may be meant the virgin's womb, as the pfalmist calls his mother's womb, Pfal. cxxxix. 15. Or secondly, the earth itself, as the lowest part of the world: Or thirdly, the grave, and the whole state of the dead: Or fourthly, hell, that by his prefence he might declare, how he had satisfied God's justice by his death, and was made Lord of all things, and now did triumph over the devils as his conquered flaves, who had so long led captive the greatest part of mankind. As it is faid, that having spoiled, or disarmed, principalities and powers, that is, the devil and his angels, which had reigned long in the children of disobedience, he made a shew of them openly, exposing them to the view of God and the holy angels, to their shame, triumphing over them in it, that is, in the virtue of his cross and passion, Col. ii. 15. He, the same, ascended far above all heavens, that is, all the visible heavens, the air, the æther, the starry heaven, which is called the third heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and the heavens, Acts ii. 34. And him the heavens must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God bath spoken by the mouth of his boly prophets since the world began, Acts iii. 21. Then (as the angels faid

faid at his ascension) shall this same fesus, which was taken up into beaven, so come in like manner, as he was seen go into beaven, Acts i. 11.

Q. Doth Christ perform, or execute, any part of the high-priest's office in heaven?

A. Yes; he is entered into heaven to appear in the

presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 24.

Q. What doth be in the presence of God for us?

A. He is our advocate with the Father, making intercession for us, I John ii. I. Heb. vii. 5.

He is our advocate, or pleader of our cause with the Father, to obtain mercy and grace for us by his intercession, or pleading on our behalf. He is at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. viii. 34. This is a principal part of the highpriest's office. As it was under the law, into that part of the tabernacle or temple, which was within the fecond veil, and which is called the holiest of all, and was a figure of heaven, went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which be offered for bimself, and the errors of the people, the Holy Gboft this signifying, that the way into the boliest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet flanding: So Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with bands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood, of goats and calves, but by his own bload he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, Heb. ix. 7. &c. When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right-hand of the majesty on high, Heb. i. 3.

To make this yet clearer to you, you must know, That the bodies of those beasts, whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, were burnt without the camp; wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his blood, suffered without the gate, Heb. xiii. 11, 14. And then

he entered not into the boly places, (as the legal highpriests did) which were made with hands, and which
were but the figures of the true; but into beaven itself,
now to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix.
24. We have therefore boldness to enter into the boliest
by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which
he bath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to
say, his flesh, Heb. x. 19, 20. And seeing we have a
great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, let us
hold fast our profession, and let us come boldly to the
throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find

grace to belp in time of need, Heb. iv. 14, 16.

This shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the priestly office of Christ, as he is mediator between God and men. One part whereof you fee was executed whilst he was here on earth. Then he offered himself to God a propitiation, or facrifice of atonement for our fins. Another part of it he still performs in heaven, prefenting that facrifice to his Father as the ranfom of our fouls, and in the virtue thereof commending our cause to him, and pleading for our pardon, and all the helps of grace, and protection against our malicious adversary and accuser the devil, and against all the threatenings of the law; prefenting all our prayers and praises, and all our acts of devotion, of love and obedience, which are all very poor and imperfect things as done by us, to God's gracious acceptance; and prevailing with him for all those needful bleffings which we want, and cannot hope to have, but through his intercession What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, kow shall be not with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right of God, who also maketh intercession for us, Rom. viii. 31, &c.

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Q. Is 7 esus a king?

A. Yes, he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, Rev. xix. 16.

Q. Hath be sovereign and kingly power?

A. Yes, all power is given unto him in heaven, and in earth, Matt. xxviii. 18.

Q. Are all things under his command?

A. Yes, God hath given him to be head over all things to the church, and hath put all things under his feet, Eph. i. 22.

Q. Doth Christ, as king, give us laws?

A Yes, a law whereby we shall be judged, Jam. ii. 12.

Our blessed Saviour, as mediator between God and men, did first, as a prophet, make known his Father's good will and pleafure, concerning our duty. and way of being reconciled unto him, and what we are either to fear or hope for from him. This very manifestation of God's will, with a penalty on the disobedient, and a promise of reward to the doers of it, is a law as firmly obliging as any law can do. Next, as a priest, our holy Jesus gave satisfaction to God for our fins by the facrifice of his own most precious blood; and in the virtue of the same great sacrifice, doth now in heaven intercede with God for us. And now lastly, as king, he giveth us laws to live by, gives us grace to help us to keep those laws, and protection in our obeying them, and will judge us by them, either rewarding us as good subjects, or punishing us as wicked rebels, at the last day, before he give up the kingdom to his Father.

These things, with a great deal more than I can now rehearse unto you, are, we are told in the holy scripture, concerning the kingdom of Jesus Christ. God bath exalted him with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins, Acts v. 31. Let all the bouse of Israel know assured, that God bath made that

God the Father, Phil. ii. 9, &c.

The same Jesus it was of whom David spoke. faying, I (faith the Lord) have fet my King upon my boly bill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord bath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begutten thee, that is, by thy refurrection from the dead, Pfal. ii. 6, &c. Acts xiii. 33. Ask of me, and I Thall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. And thus (as before I told you) prophefied Isaiah concerning him. The government shall be upon his (boulder, of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice for ever, Itai. ix. 6. Luke i. 32. Heb. i. 8. When God raifed him from the dead (faith St. Paul) be fet him at his own right hand, the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. x. 12. or of God the Father Almighty, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and bath put all things under his feet, Eph. i. 20, 21. For this end Christ both died, and ruse again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. xiv. o. God hath given him power over all flesh, that be should give eternal life to as many as God bath given bim, John xvii. 2. He is the bleffed, and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, I Tim. vi. 15. He is gone into heaven, and is on the right-hand

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of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him, I Pet. iii. 22. And he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet,

1 Cor. xv. 25.

To shew his regal power, our blessed Jesus hath put an end to the law of Moses, tho' given by God himself; and instead of the law of works, hath established the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27, 28. He hath made a change of the priesthood, and therefore of necessity a change of the law too, Heb. vii. 12. He hath abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances. Eph. ii. 15. And hath given us the perfect law of liberty, James i. 25. And requireth us, so to speak, and so to do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty, chap. ii. 12. Or by the evangelical law, whereby we are fet free from the burden of the ceremonial law, and from the rigor of the moral law. How Christ doth exercise this regal authority in his church, which is his peculiar kingdom, will be shewn you in explaining the following articles of the christian faith, and other parts of your catechism.

Q. What's the seventh article?

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VI.

end of A. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Q. Who shall come to judge them?

A. Jesus Christ; he was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead, Acts x. 42.

Q. Whence Shall be come?

A. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, and with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God, 1 Thess. iv. 16.

Q. Is there a day appointed for this judgment?

A. Yes; God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, Acts xvii. 31.

Q. When will that day be?

A. At the end of the world, Mat. xiii. 40. John xii. 48.

Q. Whom mean you by the quick?

A. Them which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, I Theff. iv. 15.

Q. Whom mean you by the dead?

A. Them that are in their graves, who shall hear his voice, and come forth, John v. 28.

Q. Shall all be judged?

A. Yes; We must all appear before the judgmentfeat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10. Rom. xiv.

Q. What then shall be the doom of evil doers?

A. Christ shall say unto them, Depart from me ye curfed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and bis angels, Mat. xxv. 41.

Q. Shall this sentence be executed?

A. Yes; They shall go into everlasting punishment, ver. 46.

In this article you learn more of Christ's kingly office; who, as he giveth the best laws unto men, to frame their lives by, as his dutiful subjects; so according to those laws he will judge them. Kings are law-givers, who yet may as well give no laws at all, but leave every man to do as he lists, as men did when there was no king in Israel; as take no care to call men to account for breaking of their laws. Kings therefore must be judges as well as law-givers, and punish such as set light by their authority, and despise government, encouraging in the mean time the obedient with privileges and rewards. This Christ will do, he will come again to examine how his laws have been kept, and will punish all the rebellious and ungovernable, rewarding his obedient subjects.

His first appearing in the world was in the greatest humility imaginable, but his second appearing shall not be so, he shall appear in the height of glorious majesty. He shall come in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels, Luke ix. 26. In such a marvellous manner displaying his royal power and authority, as that the hearts of all his enemies shall be filled with horror and confusion. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. He shall come on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, Mat. xxiv. 30. Hereafter (saith he) shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right-hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven, Mat. xxvi. 64.

He who had been most vilely and despitefully used by sinners in this world, buffetted, spit upon, mocked, and crucified as a malesactor, yet did not so much as open his mouth to revile or curse any one of them who so abused him; but prayed for them, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; shall then come armed with the sword of vengeance, and shall himself be the judge to pass a terrible sentence of eternal condemnation on all them, whom the riches of his goodness and long-suffering would not lead to repentance. God hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man: For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed

all judgment to the Son, John v. 22, 27.

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He shall come, according to Enoch's prophecy, with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment on the ungodly, Jude xiv. 15. The disobedient shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Thess. i. 9. For that is a day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey un-

K 3 righteousness,

righteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and

anguish, Rom. ii. 5, &c.

When all men are brought before the judgmentfeat of Christ, he shall separate them one from another, even as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and be shall set the sheep on his right-hand, and the goats on the left, Mat. xxv. 32. Then shall every one of us give an account of himself to God, Rom. xiv. 12. God shall bring every secret thing to judgment, whether it be good or evil, Eccl. xii. 14 Then shall the King, even Jesus Christ, say to the righteous on the right-hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mat. xxv. 34. Then shall they be caught up into the clouds, and shall be ever with the Lord, I Thest. iv. 17. But the wicked shall be fent away with a curse into everlasting torments, as you said but now. If then we call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, 1 Pet. i. 17.

Q. Which is the eighth article of your belief?

A. I believe in the Holy Ghoft.

Q. What mean you by the Holy Ghoft?

A. By the Holy Ghost I mean the Holy Spirit of God, Epb. iv. 30.

Q. Mean you the Spirit of God the Father, or of

God the SON?

A. I mean the SPIRIT both of the FATHER, and of the SON, Mat. x. 20. Gal. iv. 6.

§. As you believe in the Father, and in his only begotten Son; so in like manner are you to believe in the Holy Ghost. For in your baptism, or solemn dedication to God, you were, as Christ himself ordained, baptized in the name, not of the Father alone, or of the Son alone, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Yet were you baptized in the name only of the true God.

Whence

Whence it follows, that these three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are that one true God,

having one and the same divine nature.

The Holy Ghost or Spirit, is called Holy for a fingular reason, not only because he is in himself holy, as God; but because he is the worker of holiness in us. He is the Spirit of boliness, Rom. i. 4, Of whom the holy scripture speaking, speaketh of him as of a person, and distinguisheth him very plainly from the persons of the Father, and of the Son. He is not there spoken of, as of some power, or quality, or virtue belonging to God (as fome would have us believe); but as a person, and as a person that is truly God, and yet a distinct person from the Father and the Son. Thus Cornelius having prayed to God, was commanded by an angel to fend for St. Peter; and to prepare St. Peter to go along with the messengers sent for him, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men feek thee; arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have fent them, Acts x. 20. It was the Holy Ghost, that said unto the apostles, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them, Acts xiii. 2 He is faid to reprove the world, John xvi. 8. and to divide the gifts of God to every man feverally as he will, I Cor. xii. 11. Many other things are spoken of him, which can, in no propriety of speech, be said of any thing that is no person. He is not barely the power of God, but a person acting by that power. Hence read we of the power of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xv. 13. Of mighty figns and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, ver. 19.

As he is a person, so is he also very plainly distinguished from the person of the Father, and of the Son. Christ said, that the Father would send the Holy Ghost in his name, John xiv. 26. And again, (saith he) I will send him unto you, John xvi. 7. Again, I will send him unto you from the Father, John xv. 26.

And he shall guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but what soever he shall hear, that shall be speak. For he shall receive of mine, and shall

Shew it unto you, John xvi. 14, 15.

That the Holy Ghost is also a divine person, is plain enough, if we confider, that it was he who spake by the prophets, and that he who spake by the prophets was none other, but IEHOVAH the Lord. I, that am the Lord thy God, (faith God) have spoken by the prophets, Hos. xii. 9, 10. The Lord God of Israel spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, Luke i. 70. And thus were the prophets wont to bespeak attention to their prophecies; Thus saith the Lord: Yet was it the Spirit of Christ that spake in them, I Pet. i. II. No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. It was the Holy Ghost that spake by Isaias the prophet, Acts xxviii. 25. And the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David, Acts i. The Holy Ghost therefore, is that Lord and God who spake by the prophets, even JEHOVAH the Lord God of Israel. Who, as he is joined with the Father, and the Son, in the form of baptism; fo is he also in St. Paul's form of benediction, The grace of our Lord Fefus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoft be with you all, 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

Moreover, the creation of man is by Elibu ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as it is to the Father and the Son. The Spirit of the Lord hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life, Job xxxiii.

4. By his Spirit be hath garnished the heavens, said Job, chap. xxvi. 13. As God, he is every-where present, no-where absent, Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? saith the psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. 7. He knoweth all things, The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. The things of God knoweth

He is the free disposer and distributer of the gists of God, even as he will, I Cor. xii. II. By the Spirit's dwelling in us, we become an habitation of God, Epb. ii. 22. His dwelling in us makes us the temples of God. I Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. He that lyeth unto the Holy Ghost, lyeth not unto men, but unto God, Acts v. 3. This is enough to be said concerning the nature of the Holy Ghost, who is a divine person, personally distinct from the Father and the Son, and truly God.

Now you are to learn fomething concerning the

office and work of the Holy Ghost.

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And here first, remember, That Christ Jesus came into the world, to reform the world, and to fet up the kingdom of God in all nations by the preaching of the gospel, or the word of the kingdom, as it is called, Mat. xiii. 19. Tho' this work was to begin at ferusalem, yet was it not to end there. The Jews were but an handful of people in comparison with all nations: Tho' Christ was born King of the Jews in the first place, Mat. ii. 2. and was fent in a special manner to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, being King of Israel, John xii. 13. Out of the Jews he chose his disciples, whom he taught, to the end they might teach others. Their commission, indeed, extended at first no farther, than to those of their own nation. Go not (faith their Lord) into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the bouse of Israel, Mat. x. 5, 6. But now after his refurrection he inlarged their commission, saying, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, Mark xvi. 15. But how should they do this, who knew no other language but their own, and wanted learning to dispute and maintain the truth against the wife men or philosophers of the heathen world? To fit and qualify them for this great undertaking, was the Holy Ghost given them

in a miraculous manner, and enabled them to per-

form wonderful things.

It was the Holy Ghost's peculiar work to be Christ's Advocate with men, as he himself is our Advocate with the Father. When the Comforter, or Advocate, is come (faith he) whom I will fend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, John xv. 26. And he should enable them also to bear witness of him. He commanded them therefore not to depart from Ferusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father, which (faith he) ye have heard of me, Acts i. 4. Wait, until ye be endued with power from on bigh, Luke xxiv. 49. Te shall have power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Ferusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the utmost parts of the earth, Acts i. 8. Accordingly, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they being all with one accord in one place, there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghoft, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, Acts ii. 1, &c. So that every one heard them speak in his own language, tho' they were men of divers countries and speeches: yea, they laid hands on others, and they received the Holy Ghost, Acts viii. 17, 18. They spake the word of God with all boldness, and did signs and wonders by the name of God's boly child Tesus, Acts iv. 30, &c. God bearing them witness both with figns and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoft, according to his own will, Heb. ii. 4. giving them the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge, faith, and the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, difcerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, all these wrought that one and the self-Jame Spirit, I Cor. xii. 8, &c. These were the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Of

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Of this coming of the Holy Ghoft, and his extraordinary gifts to the first planters of the Gospel, thus faith St. Peter, This Jesus bath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right-band of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, be bath shed forth this, that you now see and bear. And thus prophesied Isaiab; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring, Isai. xliv. 3. And more fully foel, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. And also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids, in those days will I

pour out my Spirit, Joel ii. 28.

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The bleffed Jesus being exalted into heaven, as he was an high-prieft, by his powerful intercession obtained this great gift of another Comforter, or Advocate, who should be with us for ever, John xiv. 16. And as he was a King, by his royal power, bestowed it upon us. And this is the Spirit of truth, ver. 17. given the apostles to guide them into all truth, chap. xvi. 13. to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance, whatfoever Christ had faid unto them, chap. xiv. 26. If I depart, (faith he) I will fend the Comforter unto you; and when he is come, he will reprove the world of fin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged, chap. xvi. 9, &c. Thus, by the Holy Ghost, Christ enabled the apostles to speak in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, I Cor.

Such extraordinary gifts of the Spirit as thefe, were altogether necessary for them who were sent forth to teach all nations; for by what other means could they be fitted to preach to all the world? But thele we are rather to look upon as edifying, than fanctifying gifts; necessary for the first builders of the christian church to have, for the perfecting of the faints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying

of the body of Christ, Eph. iv. 12. Of the other fort of gifts, needful to all christians, you will hear more shortly.

Q. Which is the ninth article?

A. The holy catholick church, the communion of faints.

Q. What mean you by the church?

A. The whole fociety of Christ's disciples.

Q. What signifies the word catholick?

A. Universal, not excluding persons of any nation.

Q. What mean you by communion?

A. A sharing of that common love and friendship, and those helps, and benefits, and comforts, which the members of the fociety may afford one another: and a joining together in all christian duties.

Q. What mean you by faints?

A. By faints I mean holy and fanctified persons. at least fuch as are to be so by their holy calling and profession, and use the ministeries of the Spirit for that purpose.

You have here told me how you understand the words of this article. And that you may the better understand what it is that you are taught to believe, this that I am now about to fay to you, will I suppose It is this in short: The world of manbe fufficient. kind having wretchedly revolted from the true worship of God, wandering after their own inventions; and having departed from that obedience which they naturally owed him; God was pleased yet to forbear them in mercy, and not to punish them according to their rebellion. By preaching of his word, he offered them new terms of peace and reconciliation; and very lovingly invited them to turn from their fins by repentance, and to accept of the bleffing offered them, relying on his promifes of pardon, grace, and everlafting life. As many as, hearkening to his words, comply with his offers of peace, he graciously accepts, and fets his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, over them as their king and governor; injoyning them by the facrament of baptism, to bind themselves, after the most solemn manner, to live in obedience to his gospel, and to observe most religiously all his ordinances, and willingly to submit themselves to such officers as he hath appointed to be over them, to lead most holy lives, and not to be ashamed of him before men, but openly to declare themselves his subjects, and to live in a facred fraternity, or brotherhood, in a spiritual society and communion, in all the publick acts of divine worship, doing good offices one for another, and sharing in one another's blessings and comforts.

You are to believe, that God now hath, and will always have in this world, fuch a church as this; that is to fay, a fociety of persons willingly binding themselves, and covenanting to live in all humble subjection to the Lord Christ, whatever they shall be made to fuffer for it. And farther yet, That this holy fociety is not now to confift, or be made up, (as the church of God was in the time of the legal ministration) either only, or principally, of the people of some one nation, and such only as did subject themselves to the statutes or ordinances of that state or kingdom; but of persons of any nation under heaven, excluding none at all, that will submit themselves to the laws of Jesus Christ, the sole head, and supreme governor of this society, called the catholick or universal church, because persons of all nations may be freely admitted into it.

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And to this end did the holy Jesus, being King and Head over all things to the church, which is his body, send the Holy Ghost, as you have heard, first, to surnish his apostles with such extraordinary gifts as were necessary, for their preaching the gospel unto every nation in its own language; and by his sanctifying grace, to make the hearers of it saints or holy persons, and so sit members of such a holy society, the mystical body of Christ, or his church,

which

which is called the kingdom of God, Mat. xxi. 31. and of Christ, Rev. xi. 15. and of heaven. Mat. xi. 12. And christians are called the children of the kingdom, Mat. xiii. 38. And the gospel, the gospel of the kingdom, Mat. iv. 23. and the word of the kingdom, Mat. xiii. 19.

Q. Is there but one boly catholick church?

A. No; There is one fold, and one shepherd; we being many, are one body, John x. 16. 1 Cor. x. 17.

Q. Who is the head of this body, the church?

A. Jesus Christ is the head of his body, the church, Col. i. 18.

Q. Hath be placed any other to rule in the church

under bim ?

A. God hath set in the church pastors and teachers; bishops and presbyters, to labour among us, and to be over us in the Lord, and to admonish us, I Cor. xii. 28. I Thess. v. 12.

O. Shall the church never cease to be?

A. No; The gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Mat. xvi. 18.

O. How appears it to be catholick?

A. Hence, that in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him, Alls x. 35.

Q. Is the church holy?

A. An holy nation, I Pet. ii. 9.

O. Are all the members of it boly?

A. They are called to be faints: God hath called us to falvation thro' fanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, Rom. i. 7. 2 Theff. ii. 13

Q. Have the faints communion one with another?

A. Yes; We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another, and are to be of the same mind one towards another, and to have the same care one of another, Rom. xii. 5. 16. I Cor. xii. 25.

When St. Peter had confessed that Jesus was Christ, the Son of the living God; I say unto thee, (faith

(faith Christ) that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Mat. xvi. 16, 18. As much as to fay, He would always have a fociety of men, who, believing stedfastly that he was the Christ, the Son of God, should never be beaten from this faith: but tho' one generation died, and another succeeded, this faith should not die, but some of every generation should be of it, and so be a church unto him. Upon St. Peter's first sermon, they that gladly received bis word, or believed that the same Jesus which was crucified, was made Lord and Christ, were baptized, and the same day there were added about three thousand souls. And so the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved, Acts ii. 36, 41, 47. These united in the same christian faith, in what parts of the world soever their habitations were, became henceforward one spiritual corporation, society, or brotherhood, commonly called the brethren, as Acts xi. 1, and 29. xv. 23. xxviii. 15, &c. and is but one throughout the world. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Fews or Gentiles, I Cor. xii. 13.

We read, indeed, sometimes of a church in one house or family, as in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, Rom. xvi. 5. And of the churches, as of many, as of the churches of Asia, I Cor. xvi. 19. Of the Thessalonians, of Ephesus, of Smyrna, &c. 2 Theff. i. 1. Rev. ii. 1, 2. &c. And fo of the churches of the faints, I Cor. xiv. 33. Every congregation of christians, or such as meet together under a lawful minister to worship God, and partake of the ordinances of the gospel, whether it be greater or less, is a church; and again, any number of fuch congregations, under the inspection and government of one bishop, is a church of a larger extent; and when there was but one fuch church of either fort, that church was the universal church. But after men went out into the world, and converted persons of

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any nation to christianity, they did not thereby erect new churches, but added to the church, which was before; and no fingle congregation, or united number of congregations, is to be accounted the church, or a church, otherwise than as a part of the one holy catholick church, or body of Christ. There is but one body or church, even as there is but one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all; and we are to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Eph. iv. 3, &c. We are all built upon the same foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, Eph. ii. 20, 21.

The only head of this body the church, is Jesus Christ himself, as you have said and proved. From him the whole body sitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in

love, Eph. iv. 15, 16.

Pastors and teachers (as you have also said) Christ hath set, and ordained under him, to feed the church of God, which he bath purchased with his own blood, the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, Acts xx. 28. These are set for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth he no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning crastiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, Eph. iv. 12, &c.

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You see here, how that Christ hath a church, and that this church is but one, and hath but one head, Jesus Christ, and that he governeth and feedeth his church upon earth by certain officers under him, by pastors

pastors and teachers, and that this church is not confined to any one people or nation, but open to all. In Judab, of old, was God known, and bis Name was great in Israel. In Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion, Pfal. lxxvi. 1, 2. He shewed bis word unto Facob, bis statutes and bis judgments unto Israel. He dealt not so with any nation; as for his judgments, they did not know them, Pfal. cxlvii. 19. Yet even then, and long before, tho' the Fews were God's peculiar people, and a visible church formed in no other nation, fo far as we know, God had an invisible church of spiritual worshipers in other parts of the world, such as were 70b with his friends, and Melchisedek, a priest of the most high God and it may be many others. Now, however, there is no difference between Greek and Jew, for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. Rom. x. 12. Chrift bath blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to bis cross, Col. ii. 14. He is our peace, who bath made both one, and bath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make to bimself of twain, one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having sain the enmity thereby, and came and preached peace to them afar off, and to them which were nigh. For by him we both have access thro' one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the faints, and of the houshold of God, Eph. ii. 14, &c.

§. As we have heard before of the unity, and universality of the church; so now are we to consider the holiness thereof, and in what sense you are to believe the catholick church to be holy. All the members of it (as before was said) are called to be saints or holy

holy persons, and are bound by many obligations to be fo, and to be fo qualified as to join in all the holy offices of the church. Thus St. Paul, writing to the church of God, which was then at Corinth, faith, he writes to them that are sanctified in Christ Fesus, called to be faints, I Cor. i. 2. Their hearts being They ought to be purified by faith, Acts xv. 9. boly in all manner of conversation, I Pet. i. 15. Perfeeting boliness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Cor. vii. For Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be boly, and without blemish, Eph v. 25, &c. He gave bimself, I say, for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people.

zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 14.

And yet it is a very fad truth, That all persons who are by the facrament of baptism admitted members of the holy catholick church, and ever fince have in words, at least, professed themselves to be fo, do not lead fuch holy lives, as it becomes fuch persons as they profess themselves to be, to live. A great many of these professors wallow in all the filth of debauchery and profaneness, and are most notoriously unholy. Such as these, if being admonished they repent not, ought to be cast out of the church by excommunication. The old leaven ought to be purged out, that we may be a new lump, I Cor. v. 7. There are, besides these, many close hypocrites, who wash the outside of the cup and platter, but within are full of uncleanness, Mat. xxiii. 25. Such persons as these, as long as their unholiness is not visible to men, cannot fall under the censures of the church, but must be left to the judgment of God, who alone discerneth the hearts of men. The visible church of christians consisteth of fuch as professing themselves christians do not visibly

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act any thing contrary to their profession; and so long as their outward behaviour is agreeable to that profession, or if, failing therein, they humble themfelves, and do what the church requireth of them to testify their repentance, they are to be accounted in the judgment of charity members of it, and freely admitted to all the privileges of christians. This visible church is a net that incloseth bad fish as well as good, Mat. xiii. 47. You are not therefore bound to believe, that every member of this visible fociety of men is really holy. But you are to believe, that in this visible church there now is, and always will be, a company of fincere, and truly fanctified chriflians, that is, an invisible church, the sincerity of whose hearts, tho' not certainly known to men, is yet known to God the great fearcher of hearts. Thefe alone are the living members of Christ's body, and none but fuch receive spiritual life, now from him their head, nor shall live for ever with him in his kingdom of glory.

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In the mean time all possible care is to be taken, that there be no Schism in the body, I Cor. xii. 25. but that we all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions amongst us, but that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same For in the church there judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10. ought to be a communion of faints, continuing stedfastly in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayers, Acts ii. 42. Edifying themselves in love, Epb. iv. 16. together in all the parts of God's worship, and by love ferving one another, Gal. v. 13. Whether one member fuffer, all the members should fuffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members should rejoice with it, I Cor. xii. 26. In short, every true member of Christ's body is enlivened by him the head; and can continue alive no longer, than it continueth united to the rest of the body; from which being separated, it is separated also from the head, and

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dieth. Neither is any member fet in the body for itself alone, but for the service of the whole body: Such is the communion of saints in the church.

Q. Are all sincere christians partakers of the Holy Ghost?

A. Yes; If any man have not the Spirit of Christ,

he is none of his, Rom. viii. 9.

Q. Is it by the Holy Ghost that we are made boly?

A. Yes; We are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Q. Are we regenerated by the Spirit?

A. Yes; Except a man be born again of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John iii. 5.

Q. Are our understandings enlightened by the Holy

Spirit ?

A. Yes; The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, giveth unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the saints, I Cor. ii. 12.

Q. Is be our strengthener?

A. Yes; we are strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, Eph. iii. 16.

Q. Are we comforted and supported by the Spirit?

A. Yes; we abound in hope thro' the power of

Q. Doth be enable us to pray?

A. Yes; Because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, Gal. iv. 6.

Q. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

A. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

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The church and kingdom of Christ on earth are both one thing. The bringing in of the Gentiles by the preaching of the gospel into the church, to be one body of Christ with the believing fews, was the delivering them from the power of darkness, and the translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son, Col. i. 13. God had promifed to give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Pfal. ii. 8. He had said to him, (in the prophecy) It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Facob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth, Ifa. xlix. 6. Therefore shortly after his ascension into heaven, Christ began to plant his Church made up of all believers, whether Fews or Gentiles, by the ministry of his holy apostles, whom he had now, by sending on them the Holy Ghost, abundantly qualified and prepared for that great work. They wanted now no extraordinary grace or gift to that end and purpose.

It hath been (as you have heard before) the constant ordinary method of God, which from the beginning of the world to this day, he hath used, to instruct his church by the ministry of men: Yea, that Christ himself might the more familiarly converse with men to this end of teaching them, he was made flesh, and dwelt amongst them. Our blessed Jesus, being about to leave the world, did appoint men to teach all nations; and because one of their number was now wanting, St. Peter adviseth it as necessary to chuse another in his stead, Acts i. these said Christ, He that heareth you, heareth me; and be that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, dispiseth him that sent me. Tho' they were but men, yet had they God's authority; they were the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries

of God, I Cor. iv. I. Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech men by them, 2 Cor. v. 20. These being but mortal men as others are, and being to go to and fro to teach, and not to reside long in any one place, took care to ordain elders in every city as they went, Acts xiv. 23. And appointed them to do the same, Tit. i. 5 And to commit the things which they had heard and taught to saithful men, who should be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. ii. 2. And these teachers thus placed by the apostles, are said to be made overseers of the slock by the Holy Ghost, Asis xx. 28.

You may possibly meet with some sorts of people, who are wont to clamour loudly against the ministry of men in the church, pretending that all are to be taught immediately by God, and by the Christ, or light within them; and this they do, even whilst they run up and down on purpose to teach; tho' in-

deed they chuse rather to be called speakers than teachers; and for this I think they are not much to be blamed, seeing they speak much and loud, when they teach but little. The texts of scripture which they alledge for what they say against ministers, are chiefly such as these, It is written in the prophets, And

they shall be all taught of God, John vi. 45. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the

Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, Heb. viii 10, 11. To have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things, I John ii. 20. And the

anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you, ver. 27.

Now to all this, and a great deal more, which they are wont to speak to this purpose, that is, To persuade you, that you are not to be taught by men, even whilst they themselves teach you this; it may be enough for you thus to answer, That God hath always used to teach by mens that our blessed Jesus,

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in those very days whereof it was faid by the prophets, They shall be all taught of God, did teach by men; and took care that an order of men should be fet apart to teach others to the end of the world; and therefore those texts must be interpreted to signify fuch a teaching of God, as may confift with the teaching of men. And so may they be very fairly interpreted. For men who are taught by men, who themselves are guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth, are certainly taught, of God, tho' not immediately, but making use of the ministry of men. And thus God taught by his apostles at first; and therefore all who were taught by them, were taught of God. And they that speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, as all ministers do, who preach, as they ought, the word of God; by them God himself teacheth, 1 Cor. ii. 13. And they who by the preaching of men are made to understand their christian duty, and persuaded to do it, are taught of God; by them God himself teacheth, I Cor. ii. 13. And they who by the preaching of men are made to understand their christian duty, and persuaded to do it, are taught of God, I Theff. iv. 9.

Yea, whatever the men be who teach us, we acknowledge that their teaching cannot profit us, if God himself do not teach us. Paul and Apollos, tho' they were ministers by whom the Corinthians believed, yet was it only as the Lord gave to every man. The one planted, the other watered, but God gave the increase, I Cor. iii. 5, 6. It was God, who by his Spirit opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul, Acts ix. 14. So was it he that prepared, inclined, or taught men to believe in Fesus, John vi. 45. he that gives men new hearts, and puts a right spirit within them; that takes the stony heart out of their flesh, and gives them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in his statutes, and keep his ordinances, and do hem, Ezek. xi. 19, 20. That puts his fear in

their heart, fo that they shall not depart from him. Fer. xxxii. 40. And did not God do all this, whilst he taught his statutes, judgments and ordinances by men? How shall men believe on him, of whom they have not beard? And bow shall they hear without a preacher? Rom. x. 14. God promiseth to give paftors after his own heart, who shall feed men with knowledge and understanding, Fer. iii. 15. So that God's laws should not, as when given to the Tews, be written on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart, 2 Cor. iii. 3. enlightening the understanding, softening the heart, and inclining it to obedience. God, instead of outward rites, and carnal ordinances, mysterious in their fignification, promifes to give them spiritual precepts, the beauty, benefit and loveliness whereof were easily perceiveable, and apt to win their affections. They shall not any longer lie veiled in obscure rites, so that one neighbour should be always inquiring of another the meaning of them, but they should be taught so plainly and clearly, that it would be very eafy to understand them, and to know God's will in them; that is, for as many as applied their minds in good earnest to learn. Here's nothing, you fee, in all this, that is inconfiftent with the ministry of men in the church of Christ.

And as little can you find in that place of St. John's epistle, when you have considered the scope and aim of the apostle in what he there writes, which this fort of people you have to deal with rarely do. Now that we may not be at a loss about St. John's design in this place, he himself hath told us plainly what it was, faying, These things have I written unto you, concerning them that seduce you, I John ii. 26. Who were these? They whom he calls by the name of antichrifts, who teach doctrines contrary to the doctrine of Christ, especially this, That Jesus is not the Christ, and Son of God, ver. 22, 23. iv. 2 70hn 7. Yet these seducers, are such as pass for christians, because they were formerly in the communion of the church by their outward profession; but

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on; but but never were found christians, else would they have continued in that communion. They went out from us, (faith the apostle) but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us, I John ii. 19. By this it is evident, that St. 7obn's defign is to arm the weak christians, who are aptest to be deceived, against these seducers. And to this end he tells them, that they have an unction from the Holy One, or from Christ, whereby they may discern that these seducers are not of Christ, but against him. He did not therefore write unto them as unto ignorant perfons, who had never been instructed in this first article of the christian faith, That Jesus is the Christ or Messias, and is come in the slesh; but as unto them who were instructed in it. God had anointed them, and sealed them, and given the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Christ, according to his promise, fent down the Holy Ghost to illuminate and guide your first teachers; and if ye have attended to their doctrine, ye know all things necesfary to your falvation, and more especially this principal point, wherein chiefly they were to instruct men, That Jesus is the Christ. Now, I hope, that this doctrine abideth in you, and you have not forgotten it, and ye need not be taught it again, or that fuch men as these should teach you, what you have been better taught from the beginning: That anointing, the doctrine and miracles wrought and preached at first by the apostles, and yet continuing to be wrought amongst you, and by some of you, is an unquestionable testimony to you of this truth, that Jefus is the Christ, ver. 27.

This unction, you see, hindered not the apostles first after Christ anointed with it, from teaching; Nay, it is St. John's business here to teach even those of whom he saith, they knew all things, and needed not that any man should teach them: Why? but because what men have been taught in the substance,

may not be altogether so easy for them to apply aright upon every accidental occasion, and therefore have need of a skilful director in many cases: Again, the best may be forgetful, and stand in need of a remembrancer: Lastly, they may not be altogether so watchful as they should be, but may slumber and sleep when they are in greatest danger; and therefore are to have some to awake, rouse and excite them to greater diligence and circumspection, that they may discover the wolves even in their sheeps clothing, and the wiles of Satan under the disguise of an angel of light; and the cunning crastiness of them who lie in wait to deceive, and being the ministers of Satan, are yet transformed into the ministers of righteousness, 2 Cor. xi. 13, &c.

Now after all this which hath been faid for the teaching of men, a thing which tho' these men dispute against, yet if they be not suffered to do, they cry out, Persecution! we do affirm, that men's teaching is nothing worth without the teaching of the Spirit; and that besides the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit given to the apostles and others, for the edifying of the church, there are also fanctifying graces of the Spirit necessary to make men fincere christians, and to prepare them for glory. They who thus have not the Spirit of Christ, are none of his, they are not holy and living members of Christ's body the church. They that come to Christ, or believe in him, as that living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, as lively stones are built up a spiritual bouse, an boly priestbood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Fesus Chrift, I Pet. ii. 4, 5.

This is the work of the Holy Ghost in all christians. The christian by regeneration, or a new birth, being born again of the Spirit, John iii. 8. he becomes a new creature; for if any one be in Christ, be is a new creature, I Cor. v. 17. and hath in him a faith which works by love, Gal. v. 6. He is a spiritual

man,

man, that which is born of the Spirit being Spirit. John iii. 6. minding the things of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 5. We are chosen to salvation thro sanctification of the Spirit, 2 Theff. ii. 13. Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in us, which we have of God, I Cor. vi. 19. Hence, if any man defile the temple of God, bim shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, I Cor. iii. 17. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, Rom. viii. 14. And there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, ver. 1. God according to his mercy faveth us, by the washing of water, and renewing of the Holy Ghoft, Tit. iii. 5. We are changed into the image of Christ, by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18. We become acceptable to God, being fanctified by the Holy Ghoft, Rom. xv. 16. He is in us the Spirit of power, and love, and of a found mind, 2 Tim. i. 7. It is by him we mortify the deeds of the body, or flesh, that we may live, Rom. viii. 13. It is the Spirit that belpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, Rom. viii. 26. Finally, Through the Spirit we wait for the hope of the righteousness of faith, Gal. v. s.

Q. Which is the tenth article?

A. The forgiveness of fins.

Q. By whom have you the forgiveness of fins?

A. In Christ we have redemption thro' his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, Eph. i. 7.

Q. Have all sincere christians forgiveness of sins?

A. Yes; There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the slesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1.

Q. What are we to do, that our fins may be for-

given?

A. We must repent, and be converted, that our fins may be blotted out, Asts iii. 19.

Q. Is forgiveness of sins to be bad in the church?

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A. Yes; Christ's command was, That repentance and forgiveness of fins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at ferusalem, Luke xxiv. 47.

6. Our bleffed Saviour hath by his gospel called finners into his church and kingdom, on purpose to bring them thereby to falvation, and to the end that we, who for our fins deferve to be punished, and that everlastingly, might thro' his merits and mediation find mercy and forgiveness with God, who might justly have destroyed us. And it is very certain also, that none can have power to forgive fins, but God only. For he alone is the supreme King and Governor of the whole world, and hath a most absolute and unlimited power over all things, and may make what laws, and enforce them with what rewards or penalties he pleafeth. None hath this fovereign power besides himself, and none can have any authority to remit the penalty which he hath annexed to his laws, and ordered to be executed on the breakers of them. Indeed, for any one to attempt this, would be not only an unpardonable prefumption, in usurping a power belonging only to the fovereign authority of God; but moreover the height of madness in contradicting Omnipotence. And as God alone by reason of his sovereign authority, hath power to pardon, that is, to loofe us from that penalty whereby he had bound us to obedience, and we were bound over unto punishment for our disobedience; so is it certain that he may release us on what terms he pleaseth, and that none can prescribe unto him the conditions whereon it becomes him to pardon, unless he would arrogate to himself a wisdom greater than God's. If he have tendered a pardon to us upon certain conditions to be performed by us, we deserve to go without it, if

we refuse it, because we think it should not be granted upon any conditions, but absolutely. And if he have promised it on such condition as we like not, and we resuse it on that account, we must want it. We may be sure of this, that God hath tied us to no terms, which are not agreeable to his holy nature, and righteous government: And therefore we should be very vain to hope or believe, that God will forgive us our fins on any other terms, than he

hath chosen and propounded to us.

We read in God's holy word, that we are justified freely by bis grace; that is, by the pure and undeserved goodness of God the Father, no other way, than by his free love to mankind in shewing us this favour, which is an act of grace: But now it follows, that this is through the redemption that is in Christ Fesus, whom God bath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; and this was, to declare bis righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of bim that believeth in Fesus, Rom. iii. 24, &c. God the Father forgives, but it is in confideration of the redemption made by Christ, and his offering himself a facrifice of atonement and propitiation; and after all, through faith; and the believers only are the persons so justified. God, (saith St. Paul) for Christ's sake, bath forgiven you, Eph. iv. 32. Without faith then it is in vain to hope for the forgiveness of fins. By the deeds of the law, shall no flesh be justified in the fight of God, Rom. iii. 20. that is, as it is a law of perfect obedience; only by Christ, all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 39. Christ being the mediator of the new covenant, hath affured all, who fincerely obey the gospel, of the pardon of their fins. The apostle tells us, that a man is justified by faith, Rom. iii. 28. and so hath peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, chap. v. I. When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, ver. 10. Our iniquities are forgiven, our sin is covered, the Lord will not impute sin unto us, but our faith is counted for righteousness, Rom. iv. 5, &c. God bath

made us accepted in the beloved, Eph. i. 6.

When 'tis faid that we are justified, or forgiven through faith, and that faith is imputed for righteousness; we must understand it, of such a faith as is accompanied with, or begets in us repentance and fincere obedience. We must also understand by repentance, fuch a fense of, and forrow for fin, as implieth a real hatred of it, and an unfeigned purpose, and earnest endeavour utterly to forsake it, resolving to resist it, and all temptations to it, confessing our guilt, and for that our vileness and unworthiness of mercy, returning to our obedience unto God, and his righteous laws. You are to take notice, That Christ, in his gospel, calls us not immediately to forgiveness, but to forgiveness by repentance. Him bath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins, Acts v. 31. First, repentance, and upon repentance, forgiveness of sins. And therefore he commanded, that repentance, and remission of sins, should be preached in his name, Luke xxiv. 47.

Without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. Let no man boast of a faith which produceth not holiness, both of heart, and in all manner of conversation; that is, in a life led in obedience to the holy will of God. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, Rev. xxii. 14. Faith without works is dead, and profits nothing, Jam. ii. 26. Nothing avails us to justification or salvation, but faith that worketh by love, Gal. v. 6. And that's it that shews one to be a new creature, chap. vi. 16. And the proper act of the new creature is, in faith and love, to keep the commandments of God, 1 Cor. vii. 19. Now observe, God the Father hath done his part, shewing himself

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most ready to pardon us, through the mediation of Jesus Christ: And Jesus Christ hath done, and is doing his part, in dying on the cross for our fins, and now appearing in the presence of God to make intercession for us; so that God, for his sake, will not charge us with any fin which we have repented of. if we believe and fubmit to the gospel. And now it remains only, that we do our part too: And to persuade us to do it, and to affist us in the doing of it, he hath, and always will have his ministers in the church. God (faith St. Paul) bath reconciled us to himself by Fesus Christ, and bath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did befeech you by us: We pray you in Christ's stead, that we be reconciled unto God, 2 Cor. v. 18, &c. This was the great business whereunto Christ called his apostles, to declare this goodness of God unto the world, and to befeech men most earnestly to be as willing to be at peace with God, as he had shewed himself ready to be at peace with them. And hence it may become us well to confider, whether we can have any reason to hope that our fins shall be forgiven us, if we abide not in the unity of the church, submitting ourselves to the ministry of reconciliation.

Our bleffed Saviour, upon Peter's confession, said to him, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and what soever thou shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and what soever thou shall toose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. The same thing which he here promised Peter, he gave also to the rest, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained, John xx. 22, 23. Again, If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault be-

tween thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him he unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican. Verily, I say unto you, what soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and what soever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven, Matt. x viii 15, &c.

By all this, (waving what is most in dispute about the words) I think it very plain, That Christ gave to his apostles a power of judging by that Spirit which guided them into all truth, and of determining what persons were to be admitted into, or excluded out of the communion of the church: And that he hath also given to their successors in the ministry, and government of the church, the like power of judging and determining by the holy scriptures, dictated by the same Spirit . And what was done by them on earth, he would confirm, so that whomsoever they, by the right use of the keys, or power given them, should admit into the church, their fins should be forgiven them, and they admitted into heaven; and whomsoever they, by an unerring key, or power rightly employed, should exclude from their communion on earth, Christ would also exclude, unless they should truly repent, from the kingdom of And this is all that I think needful to be taught you in a catechism, concerning the forgiveness of fins.

Q. What is the eleventh article of your faith?

A. The refurrection of the body.

Q. Must we all die?

A. Yes; It is appointed unto men once to die, Heb. ix. 27.

Q. Shall our souls die?

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A No; The dust shall return to the earth as it was; but the spirit shall return to God that gave it, Eccl. xii. 7.

Q. Shall our bodies be raised to life again?

A. Yes; There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just, and of the unjust, Atts xxiv. 15.

Q. By whom shall the dead be raised?

A. God shall raise us up by Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 14.

Q. With what bodies shall we be raised?

A. This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, 1 Cor. xv. 53.

You are very plainly taught in the holy scripture. that there shall be a resurrection of the dead bodies of men to life again. This is, indeed, one of the great mysteries revealed in the gospel, and a thing which the heathen world was very hardly brought to believe; and which a great many now-a-days, who boast themselves of their wit above others, are wont to make themselves very merry with. Some there were in the beginning, who, when they heard of the refurrection from the dead, mocked, Acts xvii. 32. What will this babler fay? ver. 18. There were fuch among the Corinthians, who faid, there was no refurrection from the dead, which gave occasion to St. Paul to discourse so largely of it, I Cor. xv. 12. shewing, in the first place, that Christ was risen, a thing well known and attested, and therefore there certainly is fuch a thing as the refurrection. And then, fecondly, that Christ is not only risen from the dead, but is also become herein the first-fruits of them that slept, or are dead; For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, ver. 20. 21. Thus faith our bleffed Saviour himself, The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the M resurrection

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resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto

the resurrection of damnation, John v. 28, 29.

All shall be raised again, the just, and the unjust: but it is evident from the same scriptures which tell us this, that there shall be a very great difference between the refurrection of the one fort, and of the other: Of the body of every good christian we are told, that it is fown in dishonour, it is raised in glory, I Cor. xv. 43. A very base and nauseous thing, when laid in the grave to rot, but shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of God, Matt. xiii. 43. Our Saviour shall change this vile body, that it shall be fashioned like his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. iii. 21. Again, ver. 44. It is fown a natural it shall be raised a spiritual body. Here it stands in need of meat, drink, cloathing, physick, carnal refreshments, as the bodies of other animals do; but then, tho' it shall be a body still, and not a spirit, yet shall it no longer need any fuch things as thefe, but fubfift better without them; and by its refined nature, be made both a fitter habitation to the foul, and ferve it better in all its operations. Again, ver. 43. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. Now it is subject to divers difeases, pains, languishings, and a multitude of infirmities; then it shall be always healthful, active, and vigorous, without any the least weariness or decay. Lastly, ver. 42, 43. It is fown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It shall then be an immortal substance, neither can it die any more, Luke xx. 36.

There may indeed be several degrees of glory, wherein one may excel another at the resurrection, even as one star differeth from another star in glory, ver. 41. Yet all the bodies of the righteous shall be exceeding glorious: On the other hand, we have no reason at all to believe any such glorious change in the bodies of the wicked; for their resurrection is only to damnation, and eternal punishment with the

devil

Q. Which is the last article?

A. And the life everlasting.

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Q. Who shall have life everlasting?

A. The righteous shall go into life eternal, Mat. xxv. 46.

6. All men being finners, death hath passed upon And tho', through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, the sins of all that believe, and repent, are pardoned; yet is it determined, that they, as well as others, shall die, and not live always in this world, as now they do. Both good and bad shall die; I speak this of the generality of mankind, and not of every particular person without exception; for Enoch and Elias died not, but were removed hence without tasting of death, and some shall be found alive at the second coming of Christ; but, generally speaking, all die. We are not therefore so pardoned, as to be exempted from death; but fo, as that there is now nothing in death, that a good man needs to be afraid of; feeing it not only puts an end to all his troubles, forrows, and infirmities of all forts, but it entereth him into the comforts, joys, and pleasures, which are at God's right hand for evermore. A good man may therefore, at death, go victoriously and triumphantly out of this world, with those words of St. Paul in his mouth, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of fin is the law: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Fefus Christ, I Cor. xv. 55, &c. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 23. As fin bath reigned unto death, so grace bath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. v. 21. There

There is then a life eternal after death, the great, and undeferved, but fure reward of all the righteous, that is, of all fincere christians, the humble, faithful and obedient subjects of his kingdom or church. This life is a bleffed life, a life of complete happiness, which Christ will, at the last day, bestow on all his constant followers; saying unto them, Come, ye bleffed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Matt. xxv. 34. This is the promise, that be bath promised us, even eternal

life, I John ii. 25.

Bleffed, therefore, are the dead, which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them, Rev. xiv. 13. There Shall be no more death, neither forrowing, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for former things are passed away. chap. xxi. 4. They Shall enter into the joy of their Lord, Matt. xxv. 21. And Shall fee God, Matt. v. 8. That which is in part shall be done away. Now we see thro' a glass, darkly; but then, face to face: Now we know in part; but then shall we know, even as we are known. I Cor. xiii. 10, &c. We shall ever be with the Lord. I Theff. iv. 17. and shall be comforted after all the evils we have here fuffered, Luke xvi. 25. We shall have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, I Pet. i. 4. The crown of righteoufness. which is laid up for us, and which the Lord, the righteous Judge, Shall give us at that day, I Tim. iv. 7. In short, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, only we know, that when Christ Shall appear, we Sall be like unto bim, I John iii. 2. Eye bath not feen, nor ear beard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God bath prepared for them that love bim, I Cor. ii. 9. When Chrift, the chief Shepherd, Shall appear, we Shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away, I Pet. v. 4.

Why now should we grudge to suffer any temporal evils, that it pleaseth God to lay upon us in this life, feeing the sufferings of this present time are not

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worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us? Rom. viii. 18. Our light affliction also, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 17. 18. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedsast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord, I Cor. xv. 58. To them that by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, immortality, God will give eternal life, glory, honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good, Rom. ii. 7. 10.

Q. What dost thou chiefly learn, &c. A. First, I learn to believe, &c.

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Q. You say, you believe in God the FATHER, the Maker of all things; and in God the SON, the Redeemer of mankind; and in God the HOLY GHOST, the Sanctifier of God's elect people: Do not you berein say, that you believe in three GODS?

A. No; I believe in three, in deed; but I believe that these THREE are ONE; that is, they are so distinguished each from the other, as to be indeed Three; and yet so united in the divine nature, as to be but one GOD, I John v. 7.

This is, indeed, the great and unfearchable mystery of the christian faith; I say, it is a great and wonderful mystery, but not for this reason, that it is not now plainly enough revealed unto us in the holy scripture; for there is hardly any thing at all herein more plainly revealed and taught us as to the truth of the thing, for that's enough to be taught us, because it is all that we are bound to believe. But I therefore call it a mystery, because, though it be plainly revealed that such a thing is, yet is it not revealed after what manner it is, nor is it a thing

that our understanding can reach unto, and without revelation it could never, by human reason, have been discovered that there is any such thing. We are told by Truth itself, that there be three, and these but one God; but we are of too shallow understandings, to comprehend how these three are but one; or to answer all difficulties which we meet with about it.

And, truly, it can be no wonder at all to any one. that in any measure knows himself, that we should find ourselves gravelled in a thing of this high nature; feeing we know, by certain experience, that there are a thousand things in nature, and obvious to our fenses, so that we are very well assured of the being and truth of them; which yet, as to the manner of their being and operation, do quite baffle our reason, and we find ourselves unable to give any satisfactory, or certain answer, to the objections made against them. God's nature and essence are infinite, and therefore must needs be incomprehensible by us finite creatures; we can know no more of him, than what he is pleased to teach us: And whatsoever he hath taught us of himself in his word, we have reason enough to believe, because veracity, or truth in his fayings, is effential to him, and he can no more lye and deceive, than he can cease to be God. What he hath not taught us of himself, we presume not to know, neither are we bound to believe it: And yet we must believe that he is much more, than what he hath told us, or what we can understand perfectly, when 'tis told us; else were he not infinite and incomprehenfible.

You have been taught out of that scripture, which you have reason enough to believe to be the word of God, and therefore unquestionably true, That christians are to be baptized in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST: Even as you are taught in your creed to believe in the FATHER, in his only SON, and in the HOLY GHOST. You have been also taught, and

heard

heard it proved by the fame holy scripture. That the FATHER is GOD, that the SON is GOD, and that the HOLY GHOST is GOD, truly God, IE-HOVAH the LORD. You have moreover been taught, that the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, are three, and really, not nominally only, diftinguished every one from the other two; fo that the FATHER, tho' he be GOD, is not the SON, but the FATHER of the SON; and the SON, tho' he be GOD, is not the FATHER, but the only begotten SON of the FATHER: So also the HOLY GHOST, tho' he be God, is neither the FATHER, nor the SON, but the SPIRIT of the FATHER, and of the SON: These therefore are most certainly THREE, every ONE whereof is really distinct from the other TWO: And every ONE of these THREE is truly GOD. And yet again you have been by the fame scripture taught, That there is but ONE TRUE GOD, and therefore these THREE, howsoever otherwise really distinct one from another, are the ONE TRUE GOD; because every ONE of the THREE is truly GOD, and yet there is no more but ONE TRUE GOD. This then is that which you are taught to believe, a TRINITY in UNITY, and an UNITY in TRINITY; and forther than fo, you are not (I suppose) bound to believe in this great mystery. As for the manner how these THREE are so really ONE, as still to be really THREE; or how this really ONE, can be also really THREE, still remaining really ONE, feeing God hath no-where told us, it feems too great a prefumption in us to inquire into it, and to dispute about it: This mystery can be perfectly known to him alone, who alone perfectly knows his own nature, that is, to God; and it seems a great piece of folly to attempt an explication of things acknowledged mysterious, and for that reason inexplicable; and much greater impiety and uncharitableness is it, to charge what seems plainly M 4

plainly taught in the word of God with contradiction and nonsense, or to condemn them as heretical, who, whilst they own the truth, err only in

their explication of it.

You fay, you believe in the FATHER, as the MAKER of all things; but you must not so believe this of the FATHER, as to exclude either the SON. or the HOLY GHOST, from having any thing to do in the creation. As believing the SON to be the Redeemer of mankind, and the HOLY GHOST to be the Sanctifier of God's elect, you must not exclude the FATHER, or HOLY GHOST, from the work of redemption; or the FATHER or SON from the work of fanctification: Only because the FATHER is the fountain of all being and power, by whom the SON himself is begotten, and from whom the HOLY GHOST proceedeth; therefore, you believe that the FATHER, with the SON, by the co-operation of the HOLY GHOST, made all things; that the SON, by the power of the FATHER, and cooperation of the HOLY GHOST, redeemed all mankind; and the HOLY GHOST, by the power of the FATHER, and the merit and intercession of the SON, fanctifieth the elect people of God.

So much concerning the articles of the christian faith, which in your baptism you promised to

believe.

## THE

## Scripture Catechist, &c.

## PART II.

Question.

HAT is the end of your faith?

Answer. The end of our faith is the falvation of our fouls, I Pet.i.9.

Q. Can you not be saved without

faith?

A. No; he that believeth not shall be damned, Mark xvi. 16.

Q. Shall all they be faved who believe?

A. Yes; whosoever believeth in the Son of God, shall not perish, nor be condemned, but have everlasting life, John iii. 15.

Q. Is any fort of faith enough to fave you?

A. No; for the devils believe and tremble, Jam. ii. 19.

Q. If a man say he bath faith, and have not works,

can faith save him? Jam. ii. 14.

A. No; for as the body, without the spirit, is dead; so faith, without works, is dead also, ver. 26.

Q. What kind of faith is necessary to salvation?

A. In Christ Jesus nothing availeth, but faith that worketh by love, Gal. v. 6.

Q. How must we shew that we love God?

A. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, I Fohn v. 3.

§. They are very great things which are spoken of faith, by the Holy Ghost, in scripture. God is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. iii. 26.

A man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, ver. 28. To bim that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, Rom. iv. 5. Our faith is imputed for righteousness, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ver. 24. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. v. I. with a great deal more to the same purpose, which you may find in reading of the holy scripture; where faith is magnified above all things, as if nothing else were needful to our falvation, but only to believe: Yet this we must know withal, that it is not any fort of believing will ferve our turn. Tho' we believe the whole scripture to be the word of God, and all the articles of the christian faith to be divine truths; that Jesus is the only Son of God, the promised Messiah, the only Saviour of finners; yet barely to believe all this, and whatever else is propounded to our faith by God in his word, will be fo far from justifying and faving us, that it will add to our damnation, if we do wickedly. Faith is not a thing commanded merely for itself, but in order to something else, and as it is the root of a christian life; and so in a twofold fense it is necessary to believe.

First, To believe the articles of the christian saith to be true, is like the laying of the soundation, whereon the house is to be built; and without which it can never stand. If we believe not in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and that our sins may be pardoned for his sake, and that otherwise we must everlastingly perish, we shall never repent, nor love God, nor obey the gospel, as it is required of us to do. Faith is like the weight which keeps the clock a going, and on this account so much is attributed to saith, because without it there can be nothing of religion in us. He cannot conscientiously do his christian duty, who is not well grounded in the

christian faith.

Secondly, All our obedience is very imperfect, and all the good things that we do are defective, and fall much short of what is our duty; and instead of being pleasing and acceptable to God, for any worth that is in them, they stand in need of a pardon; they cannot justify us therefore, when God shall enter into judgment with us, nor can we have, by reason of them, any title to God's favour, or eternal salvation: But we must betake ourselves, for this, to the merits and mediation of our bleffed Saviour, that our very lame and imperfect duties, when performed by us, in the greatest fincerity of heart, may for his fake be accepted of by God: And fo he hath affured us they shall, if we believe him to be ordained of God. to be our Saviour, and through him rely on God's mercy, whilft we do our best endeavour to live according to his holy gospel. Our fins shall not be imputed to us, but covered and forgiven; and our faith, as was that of Abraham, shall be imputed unto us for righteousness; therefore is faith so highly commended in the scripture.

But now, after all this, it is evident enough, that by the gospel of Christ many other duties are required of christians, without which they can no more be faved. than without believing. Repentance towards God is required, as well as faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts xx. 21. Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, Acts iii. 19. God will render to every man according to his deeds, and calls for a patient continuance in well-doing, if we will have eternal life, Rom. ii. 6, 7. Feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, entertaining the stranger. cloathing the naked, vifiting the fick, and fuch-like acts of mercy and charity, are things for which we must account in the day of judgment, Matt. xxv. 35, &c. Then shall every one receive according to the things, good or bad, which he hath done in the body, 2 Cor. v. 10. We must forgive them that trespass against us, or we must not expect to be forgiven

forgiven of God, Matt. vi. 14, 15. Not every one (faith Christ) that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in heaven, Matt. vii. 21. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

When therefore it is faid, That we are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, all good works are not thereby absolutely excluded, so as that one, without doing any good work, may hope to be justified by believing only. It were strange indeed, that one should be used as though he were a righteous person, only because he believed Jesus Christ to be his Saviour, and had given him rules to live by, which he thought it unnecessary for him to Many good works, as you have heard. are commanded to be done by us upon pain of eternal death; and all fins are to be unfeignedly repented of, and in affection, defire, and endeavour, forfaken, if we would not perish everlastingly. And tho' the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, bath appeared. yet it teacheth us to deny ungodlines, and worldly lusts, and to live foberly, and righteoufly, and godlily, in this present world, so, and not otherwise, looking for that bleffed bope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour fesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto bimself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 11, &c. By the deeds of the law, without which we may be justified, are meant the works of the Mosaic law; that is, either, first, the deeds of the ceremonial law, which the Fews, and judaizing christians, very earnestly pleaded for as neceffary to be observed, against whom chiefly St. Paul wrote his epistles to the Romans and Galatians. Or, fecondly, fecondly, the works of the moral law in perfection, and implying a finless obedience. But the evangelical works of fincere obedience are so far from being excluded by faith, that they are implied in it, which, as it is said to justify us, signifieth such a belief of the gospel, as worketh in us the greatest love to God, and a most willing subjection to his government, by Christ Jesus our Lord, not doubting of God's mercy, and gracious acceptance of our very imperfect service, for the sake of his dear Son, and our Saviour.

We are not justified by the law of works, as given to the Israelites, by the mediation of Moses, not by any facrifice of atonement, by that law commanded to be offered, but by the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27. given by Jesus Christ. And this faith, which produceth love, and by love worketh in fincere obedience, and working by love, flieth to God's mercy, through Christ's merits, for pardon and acceptance, is the faith which is imputed for righteousness. Therefore, when it is faid, that God justifieth the ungodly, we must not so understand these words, as if God would justify them that continue in their ungodliness; for this would destroy the ends of God's government, and the great defign of the gospel of Christ. If God make no difference between the obedient and disobedient, but accept of rebels, using them as tho' they had always been good subjects, what can his righteous government fignify? And if, without repenting of their rebellion, men may attain to falvation, Christ came not to call sinners to repentance, but to encourage them to continue in fin, that grace may abound; which God forbid that any one should believe. All that can be meant by those words, is, tho' men have led very ungodly lives, yet, if they repent, they shall find mercy. And tho', even after repentance, they remain in some measure ungodly; that is, attain not to such a perfection of godliness, as to be wholly without fin; yet shall their fins be covered.

Mosaic law, or offering the facrifices for fin therein commanded, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Thus the blind is said to see, not continuing blind, but after they have recovered their sight. Thus harltos and publicans are said to go into the kingdom of God, not whilst they continue harlots and unjust persons, but upon their unseigned repentance, Matt. xxi. 31. For it is plainly said, that they which do such wicked things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 21. And you may plainly see by all this, how necessary it is, that they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works, Tit. iii. 8.

As you promifed in your baptism to believe all the articles of the christian faith, so you promised also to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life. And when our blessed Saviour gave commission to his apostles to baptize all nations, he laid upon them this charge, That they should teach them to observe all things which he had commanded them, Matt. xxviii. 20. Believing is in order to doing: We are first to be taught the will of God, that we may understand it: We are to understand it, that we may believe it; and we are to believe it, that we may do it: God's will, in relation to our duty, is told us in his commandments.

Q. Tell me how many there be?

A. Ten, Exod. xxxiv. 28. Deut. iv. 13. x. 4.

Besides those ten, which God wrote on the two tables of stone, we meet with a great many more commandments of God in the holy scriptures; but then they are such as are not of universal concernment to all mankind; or, if they be, yet are they such as are easily reduced to some or other of these ten. Some commandments which God gave, were personal, only given to but one, or to a few single persons,

persons, as was the command given to Abraham, to offer his Son for a burnt offering. Some commandments were occasional only, given on this or that special occasion, and such as did not oblige the persons, to whom they were given, in any other case. Some laws were temporary, given to continue in sorce but for a certain time, and after that, to be of none effect: And thus the whole body of the law of Moses, as typical and figurative of Jesus Christ, was but to continue till the coming of Christ in the slesh, and his finishing the work of man's redemption on the cross; and then it became void, and expired of itself.

These ten commandments are supposed to contain in them, the chief heads of the moral law, which obligeth all mankind, and is to be the universal rule of life and duty to all men. It is the same with the law of nature, originally written in man's heart, and sounded on eternal and unchangeable reasons, and such as necessarily arise from the very nature of God and man. These therefore must oblige all mankind, from their first creation, to the end of the world.

Yet, tho' we have the fum of the moral law, fignifying the law of nature, in these ten commandments, I dare not, however, fay, that there is not any thing else contained therein, besides what is so moral or natural; the scripture no-where (that I know of) telling us any fuch thing, nor could I ever fee any fufficient reason brought to persuade one to believe it: I think their being written by themselves on the two tables of stone, is but a very weak argument for it. God gave fundry forts of laws to the children of Israel, by the hand of Moses. He being their fole King, and governing them as his peculiar people, by laws of his own making, gave them fome judicial laws, (or, as some think that word most properly, if not always, fignifies judgments) that is, rules to be observed by them in the administration of justice, and courts of judicature. Other laws he gave them, called ceremonial, which fome think to

be meant by the word statutes, containing certain rites and ceremonies to be observed in their religious worship, all the circumstances whereof, as to the times, place, persons, and manner, were prescribed by God himself. And these things being, in their nature, things indifferent, and good no otherwise than as commanded, were therefore changeable laws. and were changed and utterly abolished at last. But. besides these, God gave them laws of another nature, which are commonly called moral, concerning the manners of men, and the regulating of their whole conversation and behaviour, both internal and external, and the right performance of their duties of all forts, both towards God, and towards men. The reasons whereof (as was faid) always were, and for ever will be, the same; and therefore the laws themfelves are unchangeable, fuch as always did, and ever shall oblige all mankind: And these are they (tho' I dare not fay, nothing elfe but these) which are fummed up in the ten commandments.

Q. Which be they?

A. The same which God spake, &c.

Q. What's the preface or introduction to the ten commandments?

A. It is this, I am the Lord thy God, &c.

Hereby you may easily perceive, that these ten commandments, as they were given to the Israelites, by the hand of Moses, are of no more concernment to any other people, than any other forts of laws, which he gave them, were; yet fo far as they are the laws of nature, they bind all mankind to obedience: And those of them that are owned and reinforced by the command of Jesus Christ, they more especially oblige all christians, and are to be interpreted and kept according to the interpretation which he hath given us of any of them. God gave them to Israel as terms of a peculiar covenant made between him and them, on the observance whereof he

had made all his special promises to that people to depend, Exod. xix. 5, 6. Deut. v. 3, &c. And in this preface he gives them fuch a reason for observing of these laws, as could be a reason to none but them; for they were the people, and not we, whom God had brought from the land of Egypt, and out of the

house of bondage.

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It is true, that it is here faid, he is the LORD IEHOVAH, the Maker and Governor of all the world; and therefore also is it as true, that by his supreme power and authority, he may at any time give what laws it pleafeth him to us, or to any other people; and whatever laws he gives us, we are indispensably bound to observe; but it follows not thence, that he hath given these very laws to us, or to any other nation, which he gave unto the children of Israel.

It is true again, that he is our God, as well as he was the God of Israel: He was in covenant with them, and so he is with us in a new and better covenant, established upon better promises, in the covenant which he made with Abraham long before the law was given; and therefore whatever laws he hath given us, we are by covenant bound to observe and do; but yet it follows not, that we are bound to observe and do those very commandments which

were given to the Israelites.

Once more, very true it is, that tho' God did not bring us, as he did that people, out of the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage, by the hand of Moles; yet hath he done far greater things than these for us, for which we have everlasting cause to rejoice in him, and to praise his holy name. hath, by his only Son, delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in boliness and righteousness, before him all the days of our life, Luke i. 74, 75. In gratitude therefore are we obliged to him in all things whatfoever he shall command us, yet still it followeth not that these laws,

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as here given to the Israelites, were given to us also.

That mutual relation which there is between God. the great and glorious Maker, Preserver, Benefactor and Governor, and us men his rational creatures, and tural fubjects, is the reason and foundation of our natural duty, as we are men. For fo God endued us with reason and understanding, to know the excellency of the divine nature above all created beings; his fovereign authority over us, the work of his hands; his total independency and felf-fufficiency, as the first cause and fountain of being, and all the obligations which lie upon us to honour, ferve and please him. And yet, farther, as we are finners, there is a new and greater (if there can be a greater) obligation to obedience laid upon us by his becoming, in his only begotten Son, our Saviour and Redeemer from a far worfe condition than that of the children of Israel in Egypt, when they were held by Pharaob in bondage and flavery.

We read, That when God had made an end of communing with Moses upon mount Sinai, He gave unto him two tables of testimony, (the tables of the covenant, Deut. ix. 11.) tables of stone written with the finger of God, Exod. xxxi. 18. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments, Exod. xxxiv. 28. Before the giving of this law to the Israelites, God commanded Moles to put them in remembrance of what he had done to the Egyptians for their fake, and to deliver them out of bondage, Exod. xix. 4. And how he had protected and fafely conducted them to that place wherein they then were; as also he did at the second giving of it, Deut. xxix. 2. After which he commanded him to declare unto them his gracious purpose to make them a peculiar treasure to himself above all people, a kingdom of priefts, and an holy nation, on this condition, that they would obey his voice, and keep his covenant, Exod. xix. 5, 6. When they

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they had heard this, they returned this answer, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do, ver. 8. After this they were fanctified, as God had ordered, by the washing of their cloaths, ver. 14. And on the and day in the morning, there were thunderings, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled, ver. 16. And Moles brought forth the people to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount, which was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire, and the whole mount quaked greatly, ver. 17, &c. The people thus keeping at a distance, and Moses at God's call being gone up to the top of the mount, God spake these words, the ten commandments, which he after wrote on two tables of stone, called the tables of the covenant, viz. that peculiar covenant, which God made with that people.

The decalogue therefore, or ten commandments, are not unfitly divided into those of the first, and those of the second table. Those of the first table being four, which shew our duty towards God; and those of the second table being six, shewing us our duty towards our neighbour. And thus our blessed Saviour himself divides them, calling those of the former table, the first and great commandment; which is, To love God with all the heart; and those of the second table, he calleth the second commandment, like unto the first, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. All is but love, love to God, and love to our neighbour. On these two commandments bang all

the law and the prophets, Mat. xxii. 37, &c.

Q. What's the first commandment?

A. Thou shalt have, &c.

Q. What is it to have a God?

A. To walk in the fear of the Lord, Ads ix. 31.

Q. What is it to have none other gods but him?

A. It is to turn from vanities to serve the living. God, Acts xiv. 15.

6. Let me here warn you, before we go any farther in the expounding of these commandments, that you mind these few rules. First, That where-ever you find any fin forbidden, you suppose a duty which is contrary to it to be commanded; and where a duty is commanded, you suppose a sin contrary to it to be forbidden. Secondly, That when the command or prohibition is of something under a more general name, all the particulars under it are also in like manner commanded or forbidden. Thirdly, That where fome one fin is named, yet all the fins of the fame fort are to be understood, when there is the like or equal reason why the one should be forbidden as the other. Fourthly, Where a duty is commanded, all the necessary means and helps for the doing of that duty are commanded also; and where a fin is forbidden, all giving way to temptations, provocations and occasions of it, is also forbidden. Laftly, This law being expressly given to the Israelites, in the way of a peculiar covenant between God and that people, we are so to understand every branch of it as may fuit best with the gospel of Christ.

This premised, let us proceed to the explaining of the first commandment. Wherein you see, that God expressly forbids us to own or worship any God but one; and, secondly, to own any one to be our God, but the true God only. And forbidding this, he commands us to have and worship a God, and to have and worship the true God, that is, Himself We must not be Atheists either in opinion or desire, either thinking or wishing we had no God over us. We must not be Theists, owning a God, but such an one as is the creature of our own fancy or imagination. We must not be Polytheists, worshipers of many Gods, nor idolaters, worshiping that v hich by nature

nature is not God; neither prophane persons, living without the sear of God. 'Tis only the true and living God JEHOVAH, who gave being to all things, who in the Old Testament is called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of facob, the Lord God of Isaac, who delivered his people out of Egypt by Moses and Aaron, who spake of old to the fathers by his prophets, and he is (as you have heard) the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST. It is he that here commands us to have him for our

God, and to have none other Gods but Him.

And that which is the principal thing to be regarded by us in this commandment, is the inward and spiritual worship of this one true God, which confifteth in these things. First, The furnishing of our minds with a true notion or knowledge of God, and of the excellencies of the divine nature, fo far as we are capable of understanding them. Secondly, In our entertaining the most high, honourable, and reverential opinion and esteem of his divine majesty. Thirdly, In bearing fuch affections towards him, as the confideration of his divine perfections ought to beget in us. Fourthly, In a very great care to obey him, and a most hearty desire to please him by do-And, lastly, In a most free resignaing of his will. tion of ourselves to be intirely at his command and disposal. So that this first commandment is the sum of our whole duty towards God, and the other three next following do but shew us how and in what instances we are outwardly to fignify and express it.

And feeing the duty which more immediately we owe unto God, is our giving him the glory due unto his name, or nature; the best way to find out the particulars of this our duty, is to call to mind what you have before told me you believe concerning his nature. In this therefore I desire now to help you.

Q. You believe God to be the first Cause of all things: What duty learn you hence?

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A. Because

A. Because he is the Author of our being, and of all things that may do us good, we ought to walk after the Lord our God, and to fear him, to keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and cleave unto him, Deut. xiii. 4.

O. You believe God to be a Spirit: What duty doth

this teach you?

A. Because God is a Spirit, they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, John iv. 24.

Q. What duty doth God's being an omniscient and om-

nipotent Spirit teach you?

A. To walk before him and ferve him, in truth, and with a willing mind, doing that which is good in his fight; for the Lord fearcheth all hearts, and understandeth the imagination of the thoughts, I Chron. XXVIII. 9.

Q. What is your duty to God, as he is most holy?

A. Because he is holy, it concerns us to be holy in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. i. 15.

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It hath ever been the general belief of mankind, that things were not eternally such as they now are, and of themselves; but that they had a Maker and first Cause, called God. And hence all the world hath ever had the highest veneration for this divine Power, whereon the being and well being of all things do depend. But there was a very gross error, which had got ground, not only amongst the heathen people, who worshiped strange Gods, and vain idols, which had it not in their power, either to profit or harm them; but even among the Israelites, unto whom the true and living God had many ways made himself known, and it is to be feared doth yet prevail too much among many professors of christianity; and it is this, That God will be well enough pleafed with a little outward shew of religion; that he will be fatisfied with a formal, ceremonious worship, with a doing of fomething as a task, which they have

have fet themselves to do, and think it must be done after a manner, which either they themselves have of their own heads devised and taken up, as the best way, in their opinion, of honouring God, or which by the common custom of the world hath to that end been brought into fashion, and therefore they think it a shame to stick out, and to be fingular: Or which they suppose to be the only thing that God by his command hath made it their duty to do; not concerning himself with their hearts and affections. whether they be right with him or no; nor regarding what kind of thoughts they had of him, what fincere devotion, holy defires, heavenly breathings they have after him. Such persons have the meanest thoughts in the world of the great and glorious God, as tho' he loved to be complimented by men, and delighted to see them on their knees before him, tho' he knows all this to be hypocrify only, and a piece of flattering dissimulation.

Now, tho' it be true, That God requires an outward fignification, and expression, and testification before the world of the inward reverence, affection and devotion of the heart, for very good reasons; yet for us to hope that this alone will fatisfy him, is no better than to hope he will take himself to be honoured by a mockery, and a lye. For no better is all that shew which we can possibly make of religious worship, if it go alone, and proceed not from a heart fincerely devoted to his honour and fervice. This therefore is a thing which it greatly behoves us to believe and consider; That nothing which we do in the worship of God, how pompous or costly soever it may be, can be acceptable to God, fo long as God hath not from us the spiritual worship of purified hearts. God feeth not as man feeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart, 1 Sam. xvi. 7. And God being an all-knowing Spirit, and every-where present, we are greatly concerned in every thing to consider, that

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we are always in his presence and sight, and cannot hide so much as the secret thoughts of our hearts from him. It behoves us to lay aside all guile and hypocrify, I Pet. ii. I. And we must take heed, how we draw nigh to God with our mouths, and honour him with our lips, having our hearts far from

him, Mat. xv. 7.

Circumcision was a duty commanded by God; and yet outward circumcision signified nothing, where there was not also the inward spiritual circumcision of the heart. So saith St. Paul, That is not circumcision, which is outward in the sless; but circumcicision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29. Yea, saith he, we are the circumcission, which worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no considence in the sless, Phil. iii.

3. The spiritual circumcision, that is, the mortifying of our lusts, and cleansing of our hearts from all silthiness, was the thing that God always principally regarded, Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6.

Again, facrifices and burnt-offerings were commended by God, and abundance of care, curiofity and cost was by God's order to be bestowed upon them, fuch as made them a very chargeable and troublesome service. Yet God told the Fews by his prophets, that he rejected and abhorred them, year was weary of them, and could not away with, or any longer endure their facrifices and burnt-offerings, their new-moons and fabbaths; nay, their prayers he would not hear, because they were not cleansed from their fins, I/a. i. 11. Let us therefore account it our duty to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, acceptable to him by fesus Christ, I Pet. ii. 5. Presenting our bodies a living facrifice, boly and acceptable to God, renewed in the Spirit of our minds, Rom. xii. 1, 2. Cleanfing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Q. What

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faithfulness of God?

A. I learn from God's faithfulness to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, Rom. v. 2. and of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, hath promised before the world began, Tit. i. 2.

O. May you hope for the things promised, if you

perform not the things which God commandeth?

A. No; every man that hath this hope in him, must purify himself, as God is pure, 1 John iii. 3.

God's truth being essential to him, and inseparable from his divine nature, is not only warrant enough to believe whatever he teacheth, seeing no man can desire better assurance of the truth of any thing, than this, that he who tells it cannot lye; but it is also the strongest obligation that can be, making it our indispensable duty, and necessary for us to believe, seeing otherwise we suppose God salse to his word, make him (as much as in us lieth) a lyar and a deceiver, and so deny him to be God. He that believeth not God, bath made him a lyar, I John v. 10. Take heed therefore, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God, Heb. iii. 12. Hold sast the faithful word, as you have been taught, Tit. i. 9.

But here you must beware that you do not belye God, which all they do, who take not God's words in his own sense; but fasten upon them a sense of their own, according to their own sancy, and such as will best agree with their own lusts; so doing, they set themselves in God's stead, and believe not

his word, but their own vain imaginations.

If God be the faithful God, we exceedingly difhonour him by distrusting him, and fearing that he may fail us in the promises which he hath made us. Hold fast therefore the profession of your faith without wavering; for he is faithful, that hath promised, Heb. x. 23. And to whom sware he, that they should

should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? Heb. iii. 18. But we are always to be careful of this, that fixing our faith, and raising our hope upon God's fidelity in all his promifes, we fasten not any promise on God which he never made, neither take those promises to be absolute, which are only conditional; and this they do, who hope that God will make any one bleffed, that is not holy, and obedient to his laws. These hope that God will do that for them, which he never promifed to do for any one, but conditionally, that they so behave themselves towards him, as these do not. These neglecting their duty, and yet relying on God's promises made to those only who do their duty, rely on nothing but a fancy of their own head. Such a hope is indeed no better than a most impudent and abominable prefumption, that God will have mercy on obstinate rebels, and use them as kindly as he will use his own most dutiful children. What's this but a denying of God's governing justice, and an imposing upon God as his promife, that which never once came into his mind? To all fuch vain hopers God faith, as Num. xiv. 34. Te shall know my breach of promise. It is true, that it is our duty to hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought us at the revelation of Fesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 13. But then, having such promises, we must persevere unto the end in our christian duty, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfecting boliness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Moreover, if we believe that God is faithful, it is our duty not to be weary in well-doing; but to continue patiently therein; for God hath promifed, that in due feason we shall reap, if we faint not; and that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, Gal. vi. 10. I Cor. xv. It is also our duty to suffer and endure afflictions with patience, and to let patience have its perfect work, James i. 4. And when we suffer according to the will of God, to com-

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mit the keeping of our souls in well-doing to him, as unto a faithful Creator, I Pet. iv. 19. For God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it, I Cor. x. 13. He will establish us, and keep us from evil, 2 Thess. iii. 3.

Q. What duty owe you to God, as he is a just God?

A. Because God is just, we should daily pray, that he would keep us from presumptuous sins, that they may not get the dominion over us, Pfal. xix. 13.

Q. What is your duty to God, as he is Almighty?

A. Because God is Almighty, we must stand in awe, and not fin against him, Pfal. iv. 4.

It is indeed fo much the duty of all men to stand in awe of God, and to fear him, so as to take heed above all things, that they offend him not in thought. word or deed; that to be religious, and to fear the Lord, are frequently one and the same thing in scripture. And it is now a very common thing with us, when we would call one wicked, to fay that he hath not the fear of God before his eyes. Thus faid Abrabam to Ahimelec, I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place, Gen. xx. 11. That is, I thought that there was no fense of religion among these peo-So the pfalmist, The transgression of the wicked saith within my beart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes, Pfal. xxxvi. I. Fear God therefore, and keep his commandments; this is the whole duty of man; for his justice, I say, stand in acce of bim, and fin not; for God will bring every work into judgment. with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Eccl. xii. 13.

It is true indeed, that evil is the proper object of fear; for why should one fear that which is good? God then being superlatively good, how can

we fear him? Yes, we both can and must, even as a child is to fear the best of fathers; whom he fears, not because he is evil, but because he thinks it a base and evil thing to offend one to whom he so greatly obliged, and who is so kind to him, and tender of him. He fears to do any thing offensive or dishonourable to him, or to incur his displeasure, or to provoke him to anger. He hath too great a reverence for him, to dare to do any thing that he approves not of; and tho' he knows of no evil in him, yet he knows him to be just and wise, and able to bring very great evils upon him; therefore is he still the more cautious, lest he should any way offend him.

It is then our duty to serve the Lord in love, but not with that familiar sort of love, which we use towards our sellow-mortals. With reverence and a godly sear we are to serve him, Heb. xii. 28. and to tremble at his word, Isa. lxvi. 2. To serve the Lord with sear, and to rejoice with trembling, Psal. ii. 11. Happy is the man that search alway; but be that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief, Prov. xxviii. 14. By the sear of the Lord men depart from evil, Prov. xvi. 6. The sear of the Lord is the beginning, or sountain, of wisdom, or religion, Psal. cxi. 10. and tendeth to life, Prov. xix. 23. Be thou therefore in the sear of the Lord all the day long, Prov. xxiii. 17.

Take heed of finning daringly and presumptuously against God's commandments in hope of unpromised mercy, or that God will take no notice of the sin, nor call thee to account for it. The soul that doth presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord, Num. xv. 30. It becomes us therefore to work out our own salvation with sear and trembling, Phil. ii. 12. And let the consideration of God's justice and righteous judgment move us thereunto. If then

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ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time

of your sojourning bere in fear, 1 Pet. i. 17.

Again, If justice be one of God's inseparable attributes, and if God do all things righteously, we learn hence not to despise the chastening of the Lord, Heb. xii. 5. not to disregard his hand and rod in any evil that we suffer; neither to complain for the punishment of our sins, as tho' it were greater and more severe than we have deserved, Lam. iii. 39. God cannot afflict unrighteously; therefore we ought patiently to bear the indignation of the Lord, Mic. vii. 9. most humbly confessing, that he doth right, and we do wickedly; and therefore he is just in all that he bringeth upon us, Neb. ix. 33. Dan. ix. 14.

Again, If God do all things in righteousness, we ought not to find fault with any of his doings; we are not to fret ourselves because of evil doers, nor to be envious against the workers of iniquity, Pfal. xxxvii. 1. He shall bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day: Rest therefore in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, fret not thyself because of him that prospereth in his way, ver. 6, 7. for the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints, they are preserved for ever; but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off, ver. 28. The Lord knoweth bow to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of

judgment to be punished, 2 Pet. ii. 9.

And now, if after this we consider, that this our most just and righteous God is also the Lord God Almighty, able to do whatsoever it pleaseth him; this consideration must greatly strengthen the motive now mentioned to fear him, and to tremble at the very thoughts of falling under his displeasure, who can, when he will, arm all his hosts of heaven, earth, and hell, to execute his wrath upon us. Yea, and this same consideration of his almightiness will also teach us to sear nothing at all in comparison of

him; or fo, as that by the fear of it, we should be tempted to do any thing contrary to his will. teach us to hold on with courage and chearfulness in his fervice, trufting to his protection, and hoping for his bleffing, never distrusting any promise that he hath made us, feeing that whatfoever he promifeth. as he is a faithful and just God, he will be constant to his word; and as he is an omnipotent God, he is able to perform it, how unlikely a thing foever it may feem to us. Trust in the Lord, and do good, Pfal. xxxvii. 3. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. vi. 10. and fear not, but you shall be kept by the power of God, through faith unto falvation, I Pet. i. 5. After the example of faithful Abraham, be strong in faith, giving glory to God. not staggering at the promise of God through unbelief, but being fully persuaded, that what he hath promised, he is able also to perform; even against hope believe in hope, Rom. iv. 20, &c. Be not afraid of them that kill the body, (faith the bleffed Jefus) and after that have no more that they can do; but fear bim which, after be hath killed, bath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him, Luke xii. 4. The Lord is our belper, let us not fear what man can do unto us, Heb. xiii. 6. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their reviling, Ifai. li. 7. Be not afraid of evil tidings, let your hearts be fixed, trufting in the Lord, Pfal. xii. 7. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh: For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken, Prov. iii. 25, 26.

Q. You believe God to be good, merciful, and loving:

What duty doth this teach you?

A. We learn to praise the Lord for his goodness, Psal. cvii. 8. to love the Lord our God, Deut. xi. 22. and to delight ourselves in him, Psal. xxxvii. 4.

Q. Can you love God, and be in love with this

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A. No; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John ii. 15.

Q. Can you love God and fin too?

A. No; they that love the Lord must hate evil, Psal. xcvii. 10.

O. Can you love God, and bate your brethren?

A. No; if any man say he loveth God, and hateth his brother, he is a lyar, 1 John iv. 20.

Q. Can one love God, and not deny himself?

A. No; if any man come to Christ, he must deny himself, Matt. xvi. 24.

Q. What is it to deny one's self?

A. It is to forfake all that he hath, to take up his cross, and to lose even life itself for Christ's sake, Luke xiv. 33, 36.

6. It is most certain, that no man can love any thing which he doth not think to be good, in some kind or other: Goodness, whether it be true and real, or feeming only fo to us, is that which begets love in us; as it is evil, either real or feeming, that begets hatred. Whatfoever we account good, according to the measure or degree of goodness which we imagine to be in it, doth naturally oblige us to love it more or less: God therefore is to be loved above all things: because, supposing only that we believe that he is, we cannot but grant him to be both perfectly good in himself, or in the excellent perfections of his nature; and also unto us, seeing we have from him whatfoever can do us good. The chief Good, and the Fountain of all goodness in the world, is to be loved above all things whatfoever, because of his own transcendent perfections of nature, were there nothing else to be confidered; but when, together with this, we consider also the innumerable benefits we enjoy by his loving kindness, mercy, and bounty; how we and all things owe our very being to him, are preserved by him, and very richly provided for; daily taken care of; yea, and after numerous offences, and

and high provocations, not only long forborne and spared, but still fed, and cloathed, and provided for. and earnestly invited to accept of mercy; one might very rationally think, that we could find nothing elfe

to praise and love, but God.

And, indeed, the love of God is that which feafoneth all the duties that we perform unto him. or they will be very unfavory things. From this proper spring of duty if they do not come, they can never be acceptable to God, neither will they avail us any thing at all; but if they be done in love. whatever imperfections may be found in them, they are certainly accepted of him. So that the love of God is in a manner all duties, comprehensive of all; and nothing of acceptable obedience can be wanting, where love is.

Thus therefore faid God by Moses, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy foul, and with all thy might, Deut. vi. 4, 5. which command is thus explained, (chap. x. 12.) And now, Ifrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love bim, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thine beart, and with all thy foul? And the same command God hath renewed by his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who calleth it the first and great commandment, Matt.

xxii. 38.

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O then love the Lord, all ye his faints, Pfal. xxxi. 23. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name; extol bim that rideth upon the heavens, by his name 7AH, and rejoice before him, Pfal. Ixviii. 4. Let every one of us endeavour to have our hearts ravished with the thoughts of his excellent goodness, who maketh all things work together for good to them that love him, Let all the longings of our fouls be after the bleffed vision and enjoyment of him, saying with the holy Psalmist, O glorious Lord, and our gracious God, whom have I in heaven, but thee?

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And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.

My sless and my heart faileth, but God is the strength

of mine heart, and my portion for ever. It is good for

me to draw near to God, Pfal. Ixxiii. 25, 83c.

O! let us devoutly pray unto our good God, in the name of Jesus Christ, that he would, by his Holy Spirit, help us to circumcife our hearts, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our foul, that we may live, Deut. xxx. 6. No less thing than our life lieth upon it. Beseech God therefore, that he would remove and cut off all the finful inclinations of our fouls, and all evil lufts, worldly and carnal defires, that fo we may be able to love God: for herein our life and happiness consists. No better affurance can be made us of our calling and election. according to the gracious purpose of God of bringing finners to falvation by Jesus Christ, than this, that we love God, Rom. viii. But let no christian be so ignorant of the gospel of salvation, and of the terms of the new covenant, as to presume that he may be faved without the love of God, or that he loves God, fo long as he doth not obey him in love. If indeed we own and believe, that all good things do come from God, we cannot (I think) but love him, as he is our constant benefactor, without whose continual goodness and bounty we cannot possibly subsist: But whoso loveth God, as God requireth, and nature itself obligeth him, must love him, not only for the loaves wherewith he is fed, as the multitude loved Christ; but for the excellent goodness of his nature, as he is the chief Good, and Fountain of all goodness, and also as he is a most righteous and wife governor; he must love his holiness, and imitate it as much as he can; and his just laws, obeying them with a willing heart: faying fincerely with holy David, The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. Thy words are weet unto my taste, sweeter than boney unto my mouth, Pfal.

Pfal. cxix. 72, 103. This is the love of God, that we

keep his commandments, I John v. 3.

Remember this well, that you have told me, that as the love of God, and the love of fin cannot agree together, so neither can the love of God, and of the world: An heart filled with the love of this world, and of the things of this present world, hath no room in it for the love of God. So long there. fore as you are fond of the luft of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and of the pride of life, which things are of the world, and not of the Father, you do not love God. No man can serve two masters; you cannot serve God and Mammon, or wealth, Matt. vi. 24. You must then take heed and beware of covetousness, Luke xii. 15. for covetousness is idolatry, Col. iii. 5. and the covetous person an idolater, Eph. v. 5. Whatfoever it is, that any one most loveth, that he maketh his God. Nothing in this world you can safely love so, as to set your affections upon it, but you will thereby make it a powerful temptation to you, to dishonour God for its sake. You may use all things in the world with comfort and delight; but even for this comfort and delight, God in all reason is to have our love and praise; and we are to delight especially in the goodness of the giver, who hath taken care, that we may want nothing that may be a remembrancer to us of his goodness. In every thing we should labour to taste and see how good the Lord is, and learn to delight ourselves in him, Pfal. xxxvii. 4. We may use, I say, these things with delight, fo that our delight arise hence, that in fuch things God affords us helps for our better ferving of him, with fewer diffractions and cares; and hath also done us the honour to make us his stewards of a greater portion of our Master's goods, by the pious and discreet management whereof, we may be the instruments of bringing glory to him, of doing much good to our brethren, and increasing our own present comfort, and future reward. Lastly, We may use them

them with that indifferency for them, as that we are willing at any time to part with them for God's fake, or at his call.

Again, If we be inordinate lovers of ourselves. 2 Tim. iii. 2. that is, of our carnal felves; fo that we will rest on our own wildom, and will have our own humours and wills, and fatisfy our own defires, and are resolved to pursue our worldly interests, or bodily pleafures, impatient of wanting any thing that we have a mind to, or to be restrained in the cravings of our lusts, by the laws of God or man: All this must needs exclude the love of God, whose will should over-rule us in all things. Beware then. how ye be lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God, 2 Tim, iii. 4. and learn to account even those things which are gain to you, yea, and all things, loss for Christ, Phil. iii. 7, 8. Be ready to forfake all that you have, Luke xiv. 33. that is, when God calls you to it; and to hate father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and fifters, yea, and your own life also, to be Christ's disciples, ver. 26.

You may possibly think it strange, that both the love of God, and the sear of God, should be commanded; seeing they seem, by what the scripture teacheth, to be altogether inconsistent the one with the other: For thus we read, There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear bath torment: He that feareth is not made perfect in love, I John iv. 18. Lest therefore, looking on these two branches of your duty to God as things impossible to be performed, you should never go about it, I think it needful to give you some satisfaction in this par-

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I hope I have said enough to you before, to teach you how God may be feared, tho' there be no manner of evil in him, which yet seems to be the only proper object of sear: Now I am to shew you, that he may be seared and loved at the same time, notwithstanding what St. John hath said. When it is said, There is

no fear in love, and that perfect love casteth out fear. and that he that feareth is not made perfect in love; first, You may be fure, that St. John could not hereby mean, that he who is the most perfect in love, must be without the fear of God, or should not fear God; for fo he should contradict the holy scripture, and make the Holy Ghost say contradictory things, which would destroy all the authority of scripture. God hath strictly commanded both the fear and love of himself, and therefore neither of them must be cast out by the other: What then could the apostle mean by these words? I answer. fome think his meaning to be this; That where the love of God is, that person will serve God freely in pure love, and needs not be forced or driven to it by the fear of punishment; such obedience is but a torment to him, and perfect love needs it not. This is true; but, I suppose, this is not the thing meant by St. John: Of two forts of fear we may interpret his words, and yet both fear and love is every one's duty. It is either, first, that slavish fear of God, as of an angry and implacable Master, whom we can never hope to please, when we do our best to serve him; but we suppose him always ready, on every the least fault committed, to take the advantage of it, to exercise his severity in punishing us; and tho' we repent, to find fomething or other wanting or amils, for which he will condemn us; all which fear comes from a wrong opinion of God, which also leffeneth our love towards him. Or rather, St. John's meaning is, that the love of God casteth out the fear of perfecution, or of any thing that the devil or wicked men can do against us. The love of God will certainly (as many thousands of martyrs have witnessed) fo far cast out all fear of suffering for Christ's sake, that we shall prefer the pleasing of God, before our bodily ease or safety; and the more perfect our love of God is, the more it casts out both our slavish feat of God, which was wont to torment us, and to hold out

our consciences on the rack, with a terrible sense of God's wrath unquenchably incensed against us, so that we could never serve God with a quiet and chearful mind; and also the less all fear of suffering in the body groweth, so that all affliction appeareth light for the love of him, for whom, or according to

whose will, we suffer.

To fay all in a few words, We love God as the best and most excellent of all beings; and therefore are afraid, lest either we ourselves, or any other, should be so base and unworthy, or indeed senseless and sottish, asto do any thing to his dishonour: We love him best, because he both can, and is always ready to do us the most good; and, for the same reason, we fear to lose his favour: We love him, because he forbeareth to punish us, as he could have done, and we had long deserved; and because he is willing to pardon, whenever we repent; and therefore we fear to continue in our fins, because he will not forgive the impenitent: As our love to him increaseth, we know our state to be so much the better; and our fear of being condemned grows fo much the lefs, and the prospect of death and judgment doth so much the less affright us; and for all this we find still more cause to love him, and the more we love him, the more chearfully we ferve him, and the more willing we are to fuffer any thing for him: And yet the more we love, the more fearful, that is, cautious we are, lest we should even feem to behave ourselves unthankfully towards him, thereby rendering ourselves uncapable of the benefits of his love.

Q. What is your duty to God as your Maker?

A. Our duty is, to walk humbly with our God, Mic. vi. 8. and to submit ourselves unto him, Jam. iv. 7.

Q. Are you your own, or is God your owner?

A. We are his, and not our own. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein, Pfal. xxiv. 1.

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Q. Ought you not to be satisfied with whatsoever

God doth with you, or any other?

A. Yes; it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, I Sam. iii. 18.

Q. Must you not trust to God's providence?

A. Yes; taking no thought for the morrow, Mat. vi. 34.

Q. Must you be contented with your present con-

dition?

A. Yes; we must be contented with such things as we have, Heb. xiii. 5.

This that you have here told me, is certainly your duty to your Maker, and you are as highly concerned to learn, understand, and do it, in every branch of it, as most of us are too apt to difregard it. In what condition foever you are in this world, high or low. in advertity or prosperity, or whatever you here enjoy or fuffer, you are still to consider, that neither you yourfelf, nor any thing in the world, either now is, or ever was, purely and absolutely your own; neither have, or ever had you an arbitrary power of using and disposing of any thing according to your own mind. God never made you an unaccountable mafter of yourfelf, or of any thing elfe; but a steward only of so much as he thought fit to entrust you with the management of. He that made both you, and all things, is always the Lord both of you and all things; whatfoever he hath bestowed upon you, he could never alienate the right to all things from himself. God then being the absolute Lord and Owner of all things, may do whatfoever he will with his own, Matt. xx. 15. even as we ourselves might also do, were there any thing that we could truly call absolutely our own.

Now this one fingle confideration, that we are not our own, and that there is nothing at all abfolutely ours, is enough of itself to humble us, and to bring us to think very meanly, and yet most justly,

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of ourselves. God is our Maker, and therefore we are no better than what he made us, and ought humbly to acknowledge it; but we are a great deal worse than he made us, and pride was the cause of that, and a vain ambition of being our own masters. Remember, God made man of dust, and that dust of nothing; and is this a matter of boalting, that your original was nothing? Can you be any thing of price and worth before God, who raifed you out of nothing, and in comparison with whom you still are nothing? And if you think you have fomething which gives you a pre-eminence among other men. ask yourselves, who made you to differ from another? You were all originally nothing, and whatever now any one is, or hath, more than another, he could not be or have it of himself; nor can he assure himself he shall be what now he is, and enjoy what now he hath; or that the most abject and despised of men, may not to-morrow be advanced above him, feeing both are still God's own, and he may do whatever he will with his own. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to bonour, and another to dishonour? Rom. ix. 21. Cannot I do with you as this potter? faith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine band, O bouse of Israel, Jer. xviii. 6. Learn then of the apostle, to serve the Lord with all humility of mind, Acts xx. 19. Whosoever shall bumble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Matt. xviii. 4. Humble yourselves in the fight of the Lord, Jam. iv. 10. And be cloathed with bumility, I Pet. v. 5.

It is your duty to refign and give up yourselves, and all things, most freely, and without any refervation, to the command and disposal of God: Neither are you to usurp an authority and power, such as God never gave you, to use yourselves, or any thing you have, just as you have a mind to do, without ever consulting him to know what is his good

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will and pleasure. If we were in our own power, and had no law but our own will, we might do what we would; but we are not fo, and therefore we are to inquire what our Lord by his law commands or forbids, or hath left to our own choice, giving us leave therein to use our own discretion. We are all no more than his flewards at most, and bound to be faithful, and to observe his orders and commands, in our management of whatfoever portion of his goods he hath committed to our trust; else shall we be accused, found guilty, and condemned, Luke xvi. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or what soever ye do. do all to the glory of God, I Cor. x. 31. which then we do, when observing the rules and laws given us by Jesus Christ for the pious, charitable, and fober use of every thing; in the name of our Lord, we give thanks for every thing unto God the Father

by him, Col. iii. 17.

Whatfoever God giveth, it is our duty to receive it thankfully, and to use it religiously; and when it pleafeth God, by what hand or means foever, to take it from us, it is our duty to say with 70b, The Lord gave, and the Lord bath taken away; bleffed be the name of the Lord, Jobi. 21. Whatever he hath taken, he hath only taken what was his own, and from his own: and whatever it pleafeth him that we shall fuffer, it well becomes us to fay after him, Father, not our will, but thine be done, Luke xxii. 42. What God commands, is our duty, and so we are to do it without disputing, and whether we understand the reason why 'tis commanded or no; and so whatever he forbids, we are as willingly to forbear the doing of it; this is to refign both our reason and our will to authority. Whatever by his providence he brings to pais, or fusiers to be done, we must not murmur at it; we must patiently bear it; and whatever our present condition be, we ought to be contented with it; learning with St. Paul, in subatever fate we are, therewith to be content, Phil. iv. 11. And

all this, because we are his, whose right in us, and unquestionable authority over us, we heartily own and rest in.

Laftly, If we be God's own, we need not fear, but he will sufficiently provide for his own. Our duty is to be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make our requests known unto bim, Phil. iv. 6. This is to own his right to, and dominion over, all things, in that we betake ourselves to him alone, as the sovereign Lord of all, who can and will order all things for the best advantage to them that faithfully serve him, trusting to him in all things, through Jesus Christ. It is a great dishonouring of him to trust to any thing more than to his goodness, and to fly to fuch shifts, arts, and devices, of our own heads, and the devil's fuggestion, to help and relieve ourselves, as he hath forbidden us to use, or at least seems to difallow of. This is both to feek elsewhere, what God alone hath power to bestow, and to trust to lying vanities, more than to his loving kindness: Take heed therefore of confulting devils, or asking help of any who hold communication with them, under what names foever they pass. They who use divinations, or foretel things to come; observers of times, by observing of the clouds, the planets, dreams, &c. pretending to the knowledge of future things; inchanters or augurs, fuch as by observing accidents, as the chirping, or flying of birds, the falling of falt, meeting of a hare, and the like figns of good or ill luck, as they account them, affright people; witches, or forcerers, magicians, called now wife men or women, and fuch as do wonders by whifpering and muttering certain words, called commonly charmers, confulters of familiar spirits, or devils, as Saul did the witch of Endor; wizards, or cunning men; and necromancers, fuch as feek to the dead; all fuch are an abomination to the Lord, Deut. xviii. 10, 11, 12. Add

Add to these astrologers, star-gazers, monthly pro-

gnosticators, Ifa. xlvii. 13.

Let us abhor these wickednesses, trusting only in the Lord, and casting all our care upon bim, who careth for us, I Pet. v. 7. In all our ways acknowledging bim, and be will bring it to pass, Prov. iii. 6. Committing our works unto the Lord, that we may be eftablished. Prov. xvi. 1 3. Yet are weinot to neglect the works of our honest callings, nor to be slothful in business, Rom. xii. 11. But to work with our own hands, I Theff. iv. II. For if any man will not work, neither bath be any right to eat, 2 Theff. iii. 10. This then must we do, yet still without carefulness. I Cor. vii. 32. neither being of a doubtful mind, Luke xii. 20. But pray unto God to establish the work of our hands upon us, Pfal. xc. 17. and committing our ways unto him, trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass, Pfal. xxxv. 5. Take no thought for the morrow, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewith shall we be cloathed? Mat. vi. 31. But truft in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thing own understanding, Prov. iii. 5.

Q. Which is the second commandment?

A. Thou shalt not make to thy self, &c.

The chief part of God's worship, and that which he principally regardeth, and without which nothing that we do in his worship can be acceptable to him, is the inward and spiritual worship of the heart and soul. This therefore is provided for by God in the first place, commanding that we acknowledge him the only true God, and none other, to be our God, that is, that we take the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, for our only God; that we honour, love, and fear him, trust to him, and seek our happiness in him only, hoping for salvation, thro' the mercy of the Father, the merits of the Son, and the sanctification of the Holy Ghost.

But

But now, after care taken for the inward worthip of the spirit, God also gives commands for the right performance of the outward and bodily worship we are to give unto him. God hath made us bodies as well as fouls, and both fouls and bodies share in his bleffings, and hope to be happy, and therefore should join in his service, glorifying him all the ways they can. Our fouls not only dwell in our bodies, but act in and by the bodies which they enliven; and as they make much use of the bodies as their instruments in other operations, so it is fit they should make the best use they can of them in God's worship. It being most natural for the body by its outward gestures to signify and express before others the inward affections of the mind, no man can give a fufficient reason why it should not do so in the worship of God. Therefore in the three following commandments God doth give laws for the doing of this in an acceptable manner. In this fecond commandment he ordereth, That no idolatrous rites be used by us in our adoration of him. third, That in our words we dishonour not his holy Name; and in the fourth, That we fet apart a fufficient portion of our time for his worship.

In this commandment concerning the rites of God's worship, you are to observe first, what is forbidden, and next observe, the menace against such as violate this law. For the better understanding of the law here given, and of the reason of it, we are to know, that when God gave these laws to Israel, the whole world was over-run with idolatry, or the worshipping of those things as gods, which were indeed no gods. Instead of the one true God JEHOVAH, the Maker of all things, men had set up a multitude of strange gods and vanities to worship. And tho' the wiser and more considering sort of heathers did confess that there could be no more but one supreme Being, or God; yet in compliance at least with the vulgar, and the prevailing opinion

of the multitude, they allowed of the worship of others besides him, and together with him, as inferior and subordinate gods. Either they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, called the host of heaven, and expressy forbidden to be worshipped by the Israelites, Deut. iv. 19. Or men and women, who had been famous among them for some brave heroick actions, or some very profitable invention; or, it may be, only infamous for some notable or extraordinary wickedness and villainy: And this (by the way) is a convincing proof, that the heathen nations either by the light of nature, or by tradition, did

not doubt of the immortality of the foul.

And because these deified persons were absent from them, and no more to be feen by them; partly to represent them as tho' present, and partly to honour their memory, they fet up images, both as monuments and refemblances of them; whom they supposed both to have been their great benefactors, and to be yet always ready, some in one kind, and others in another, to help and fuccour them. Therefore whatever kind of honour and worship they supposed most proper to be given to these their imaginary gods, they addressing themselves to their images, in which they supposed them to reside, and by which to work, especially at the times of worship, they paid it all to the image immediately. And the devils, to blind them the more with his delufions, and to hold them fast to this idolatrous worship, did often do very wonderful things, acting himfelf in and by these images. So that in effect, whether they intended any fuch thing or no, what they worshiped by or before these images, was nothing else but some evil spirit thus deluding and abusing them. Hence faid St. Paul, The things which the Gentiles facrifice, they facrifice to devils, and not to God, I Cor. x. 20. They shall no more (faith the God of the Israelites) offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring, Lev. xvii. 7. Numb.

Numb. xxv. 3. Deut. xxxii. 17. Yet were they mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, the idols of Canaan, Psal. cvi.

35, &c.

Now, as God forbad his people in the first commandment, to have and worship any such gods as these, or any thing in the world for god, but commanded that they should religiously worship Himself only, as the only God; and so in that precept forbad the groffest fort of idolatry, the worshipping of those things as gods, which indeed are no gods, and ferving the creature more than the Creator, who is God bleffed for ever: So now, in this commandment he forbiddeth a secondary fort of idolatry, the worshipping of Himself, the true God, after an idolatrous manner; or in the same way, wherein the heathen people worshipped their idols; that is, especially by fetting up images for his worship. Take beed that thou inquire not after their Gods, faying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do hkervise. Thou shalt not do so to the Lord thy God, Deut. xii. 30, 31. iv. 12, &c.

Q. Did God bere forbid the making of any image

wbat soever?

A. No; for he commanded the cherubin to be made in the tabernacle and temple, and the brazen ferpent in the wilderness, Exod. xxv. 18. Numb. xxi. 9.

Q. Are we forbidden to make any image of God?

A. Yes; we must not liken God to any thing, or compare any likeness unto him, Isa. xl. 18.

God being by nature a pure spiritual substance and invisible, it must needs be one of the absurdest things in the world, to imagine that any image or similitude can be made of him. To forbid this, seems to be altogether needless; for how an invisible

invisible thing can be represented by a visible image, no man can conceive. Yet fo ftrangely was mankind beforted by the devil, that even that people, whom God had instructed by Moses and the prophets. stood in need to be often put in mind hereof, that they never faw any likeness of God. Te heard the voice of the words at the giving of the law, (faid Mofes) but ye faw no similitude. Take ye therefore good beed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire) lest you corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female. the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air. the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou feeft the fun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the bost of beaven, thou shouldest be driven to worship them, Deut. iv. 12, &c.

It concerns us greatly to give unto God the honour of his glorious Majesty; and therefore are we concerned to take heed how we entertain fuch low thoughts of him, as to think him a finite and material Being, fuch as may be limited, and inclosed within the walls of an house, or resembled by any creature. We are, in thinking on him, to keep our minds as free as possibly we can from framing any fimilitude of him. Hence to make use of any fort of image, and to fet it before our eyes in his worship, must needs be (to say the least of it) a very dangerous thing. For every image is the image of fome material thing, and therefore is apt to fill our heads with foolish fancies and false imaginations of God, which is a corrupting of our minds. Very few, and they the most ignorant, of the Gentiles, and not fuch as used to busy their reason much in contemplating the nature of things, were fo foolish as to think, that the images which they adored, and before which they bowed themselves, were either gods, or so much as the true images of him who is truly God. They owned, I mean the wifer fort of them, one great Deity, or divine Power, which governed the world, and dispensed either gifts or punishments by fuch instruments, as he pleased to make use of. They supposed the heavens or heavenly bodies to be as his palace and court, and addressed themselves to him as resident in the sun, moon, &c. They supposed there were some persons by whose mediation he bleffed them, and they were to worship him; and to these they set up temples, and images. which they looked on only as fymbols and reprefenters of them, and of that invisible power which acted in, and by them, to bring them to their minds, to move their affections, and to raise their devotion towards them. Yea, some of them thought that by their prayers and facrifices, as by certain charms, the invisible powers might be invited to come and make use of such images, as though they served them instead of bodies wherein they might converse with men. How like is all this to the image-worthip now in use in the church of Rome? And were it proper in a Catechism, to examine all the pleas of that church, for their worshiping of God and faints before images, we might find that many heathen people could have pleaded just so for their idolatry. But this was their folly, and it must be something worse in christians, who are taught to worship God only, and that in spirit and in truth. St. Paul faith of the Gentiles, That when they knew God as well as by the light of nature he could be known, as to his eternal power and Godhead; yet they glorified bim not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish beart was darkened. And they changed the glory of God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beafts, and creeping things, Rom. i. 21, &c. We ought

ought not to think, that the Godhead is like to gold or filver, or stone graven by art of man's device, Acts xvii. 29. He dwelleth not in temples made with bands, neither is worshipped with man's hands, as the be

needed any thing, ver. xxiv. 25.

To use images, tho' it be in the worship of the true God, is that very fame kind of idolatry, for which God severely punished the children of Ifrael. St. Paul gives this command to christians: Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them, that is, some of the Israelites, I Cor. x. 7. And who were these. but the same of whom it is there said, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play? These were they who had perfuaded Aaron to make the molten calf in the wilderness, saying, Make us gods to go before us: for as forth is Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands, Acts vii. 40. Thus Exod. xxxii. 6. The people fat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Now it can never enter into the head of any confidering man, that the Israelites, who had fo lately feen the wonders which God had wrought in their deliverance out of Egypt, should be so fottish as to think, that that molten figure of a calf, which at their request was but just now made, and that of their golden earings, was really a God, and that very same God too, which had delivered them out of Egypt, which was done for them, before it was so much as a molten calf? No, certainly. But thus indeed it was; God had made use of his servant Moses as his instrument to bring them out from their Egyptian bondage; and him they looked on as one who was to them in God's stead to conduct and lead them, having God always present with him. Now Moses having been fometime absent from them, they cry out unto Aaron, faying, Up, make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought

brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of bim, Exod. xxxii. 1. The calf then was to be in Moses's stead, and some fuch thing as they had feen among the Egyptians, they would have to go before them as a fymbol and representation of God. Thus they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass, Pial. cvi. 19. When Aaron was, thro' their importunity, prevailed with to make the calf, he built an altar before it, and made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord, ver. 5. Whence it seems plain, that by this image they worshipped the Lord, yet is the image called an idol, Acts vii. 41. And they are called idolaters, I Cor. x. 7. Such also was the idolatry in Feroboam, of whom it is so often said, That he made Israel to fin. His defign was not to draw the people away from the worship of the true God, but to keep those tribes which had revolted to him from Reboboam, from returning again to him. He thought, that if they were fuffered to go up yearly to keep their feasts, as they had been wont to do, at Jerusalem, they might by their brethren be the easier tempted to do this. He therefore fet up for them two golden calves, in Dan and Bethel, that before them they might worship the Lord, that brought them up out of Egypt, I Kings xii. 26.

Q. Are we not bound to give unto God some holy worship?

A. Yes; We are to glorify God with our bodies, and our spirits, which are his, I Cor. vi. 20.

Q. Are we not to use some bumble posture of body in the worship of God?

A. Yes; it becomes us to worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, Psal. xcv. 6.

Q. May we not bow down in a religious worshipping of angels or saints?

A No; Let no man beguile us of our reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, Col. ii. 18.

Q. May we give unto God any worship, but what he

bath taught us?

A. No; Whatsoever thing God hath commanded, we must observe to do it; we may not add thereto, nor diminish from it, Deut. xii. 32.

You were taught before, That tho' God principally regardeth the inward affection and devotion of the heart, to that he will not accept of any outward acts of worship without it; because all without it is no better than a more formality, and vile hypocrify: Yet being the Maker, Preserver, and Redeemer of the whole man, both foul and body, and as we hope to be eternally happy as well in the one as in the other; fo is it most reasonable, that they both join in his worship and service: And that this is a thing so natural to us, that it is a wonder how any one should feruple at it, as at a thing misbecoming the worship of God, or, as they please to term it, superstitious. It is natural (as was faid before) for the body on all occasions to be affected variously according to the inward motions of the foul. Who is there that inwardly rejoiceth, or grieveth, feareth, loveth or is angry; but his looks, words, gesture, and outward bodily behaviour some way or other discovers it?

And then, when in the next place we consider ourselves, to be (as we really are if we be christians indeed)
members of one spiritual body or society of men,
who are bound to worship God together in publick
assemblies, confessing Christ openly in the face of the
world, neither ashamed nor asraid to own ourselves
his disciples; and endeavouring to edify one another in the christian religion, we must needs judge it
very fit, that in such assemblies for publick worship,
every thing be done to the best advantage, and so as
may best serve the ends of such meetings; so as we
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may most visibly and remarkably shew ourselves the followers of Jesus Christ, and so as we may best excite and raise one another's devotion. Now it would be ridiculous to think, that any inward act of religion invisible to any one in the congregation, but to God and ourselves, should conduce any way to this end of stirring up and edifying one another, if it be not outwardly fignified and expressed in such words, actions and postures of body, as are most suitable to the feveral parts of our worship. I shall at this time instance in prayer only: Wherein as we ought to pray in all humility of foul; fo ought we to express and signify, before our brethren there assembled to join in the fame duty with us, that inward humility of foul, by the lowly bodily postures of kneeling, bowing down, or falling prostrate on the ground, or whatever else is the most common ceremony of humility and fubmission, self-abasement and reverence in the countries wherein we live. What better examples can we defire to have for our imitation herein. than those which are commended to us in holy scripture? Solomon kneeled down upon his knees to pray, I Chron. vi. 13. So did Daniel, even when by that posture of body he discovered his worshipping of God to them who lay in wait for this very thing as a crime to accuse him of, and to take away his life, Dan. vi. 10. So did St. Peter, Acts ix. So did St. Paul and his compan, Acts xx. 36. xxi. 5. And to fay all, fo did our bleffed Saviour Jefus Chrift himself, not only giving us a pattern and form to follow in the matter of our prayer, but also a copy to imitate in our bodily behaviour at prayer, Luke xxii. 41. And indeed kneeling was fo generally the known proper gesture of prayer, that when St. Paul would inform the Ephefians that he prayed for them, he thought it enough to tell them thus, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph. iii.

As for the religious worshipping of saints and angels, we have not any warrant at all, or example to be imitated in the whole book of God, which is our only rule of faith and worship. St. John tells us, that he twice fell at the feet of the angel that was then present with him, and that he fell down to worship him; and both times he received an answer from the angel before which he fell down, which is enough to fatify any man, that fuch worship is as unacceptable to the holy angels themselves, as it is to God. See thou do it not, faid the angel; I am thy fellow fervant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Fesus: worship God, Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9. if the angels present are not to be worshipped, how much less those of them who are absent? and whether they take any notice at all of us, we know not. Indeed the glorified faints and angels are highly advanced above us, and the angels do minister for us by God's appointment, and as he pleafeth; and therefore it becomes us well to honour them whom it hath pleafed God to honour, and to make instruments of much good to us: we are to esteem them according to their dignity, to love them, and to praise God for them, and admire his grace in them; but we must remember they are creatures, and have no right to religious worship. Let therefore the church of Rome defend her practices of this fort as well as she can, we must not make so bold with God, as, without any warrant from him, to worship religioully any other but himself, left he should condemn us of idolatry.

S. In this commandment we are ordered to worship God according to his own institution, and not by a devised worship of our own invention. Divers times are we commanded, neither to add to, nor to take from the word and commandments of God, as Dent. xii. 32. iv. 2. Prov. xxx. 6. Whereby we are to understand thus much, and we ought carefully to observe

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observe it: That God being the supreme law-giver. whatfoever it is that he hath commanded us to do. and in what manner foever he hath declared it his will to have it done; even fo, and no otherwise, we must do it; and whatsoever by any law he hath forbidden us to do, we must religiously abstain from Whatfoever he hath told us as a truth, either as a history of what hath been, or a doctrine to be believed, or as a prophefy of fomething to come hereafter, we are firmly without all doubting of it to believe, whatever promise he hath made, we are to hope for a performance of it; and whatever he hath threatened, we are to fear. We must not of ourselves add to, or diminish any of these. We must beware of that detestable prefumption of fathering any thing upon God which never proceeded from him, or belying the Lord, Fer. v. 12. And who can be faid to do fo, if they do not, who affirm any thing to be a command of God, which he no-where hath commanded? Or that fay any thing is forbidden by him. which no law of his forbiddeth? Or main any doctrine to be taught by him, which in no part of his facred word he ever taught? Or any thing to be foretold, promised, or threatened by God, which is not fo? Or, in a word, any thing to be a necessary duty, or a damning fin, which by God's word doth not appear to be fo; for or against which no law of his is there to be found?

We must not therefore presume to worship God after our own inventions, or to make what we please a necessary part of his worship; but here we are wholly to be guided by his own direction given us to that end and purpose. Neither ought we rashly and harshly to condemn every thing that is used in the worship of God as a sin, and odious to God, so long as we do not find it any-where forbidden by God in his holy word; that against which we can find no law, we must not take upon us to condemn as a sin. In this case we are to distinguish between the necessary

parts of God's worship, the necessary circumstances of it, and the rites and ceremonies used in it.

The things which are necessary, and properly called parts of religious worship, are only such as are prescribed and commanded by God himself; such as now are prayer, praise, thanksgiving, hearing God's word, participating of the sacraments, and an humble adoration of the divine Majesty. The necessary circumstances of divine worship are the times or hours of worship, the place, the habit, the posture and gesture, the forms and methods, and such-like. Lastly, Besides these, there may be some rites and ceremonies made use of, for decency, and the greater

folemnity of our publick worship.

Now, if any person shall presume, or any church arrogate to itself an authority to command any thing as a necessary part of religious worship, which God hath no-where ordained; or to forbid any thing which God hath commanded to be used as a part of his worship: Or, if any person or church shall injoin any one particular circumstance or ceremony of worship, as neceffary by God's command, or to make our worship acceptable; or forbid any circumstance or ceremony, as unlawful and finful, as if it were forbidden by God. which is not forbidden; that person or church is guilty of adding to the word of God; and is one of them, of whom our bleffed Saviour faith, In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men, or commandments of men, Mat. xv. 9. Or, as God spake before by his propher, Their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men, Ifa. xxix. 13. The worship of such persons is not according to the law and doctrine of God, but according to the inventions of men.

How they of the Roman communion will be able to excuse themselves for their facrifice of the mass, for their new sacraments, their image-worship, and the like additions to the word of God, and especially for making their traditions equal to the written word; or how they can clear themselves of the guilt

of

guilt of taking away from God's word, in forbidding marriage, and meats, and depriving the laity of the cup in the facrament of the Lord's Supper; and all men of falvation, that subject not themselves to the authority of their church, it greatly concerns them to look to it in time. You have great cause to give God thanks, that you live here in a truly christian church, which commands you nothing as of necessity to falvation, but what God in his word hath made fo. And that you may understand this, you are allowed to have the bible in your own language, and earnestly called upon to fearch the scriptures, to fee if all her injunctions agree not with the doctrine of Christ. The more to blame then are they that separate from her communion, because she commands fome things for order, edification, and decency only, which she owns to be indifferent in their nature, and changeable as there shall be occasion for it.

Some circumstances are necessary in the general, tho' in the particulars they be not fo, but may be altered. We cannot give a worship to God, but at fome hour, in some place, in some habit and posture, in some form and method, &c. Tho' then we are not limited to any particular hour, place, habit, &c. yet why should not these things be fixed by the order of the church, to avoid diforder and confusion? And tho' there be no command of Christ for many circumstances, rites and ceremonies in particular; yet, as some of them are such as there can be no publick worship without them, and others of them are fuch as without them it would fall short of that decency and folemnity it is fit that it should be performed withal; fo there are given us fome general rules about fuch things. It is commanded that all things be done to edifying, I Cor. xiv. 26. That we give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God, I Cor. x. 32. That all things be done decently and in order, I Cor. xiv. 40. Which place of scripture duly considered, saith Mr. Calvin, heweth us the difference between the papal tyranny

of imposing their edicts on mens consciences, commanding such things as are in themselves unnecessary; and the pious laws of the church, which provide for decency and peace, and whereby discipline and order

are preserved.

It cannot be thought, that fuch rules as thefe were given to the church, without an intention, that they should by some or other therein be put in execution; and certainly they, whose office it is to see these general rules observed in the church, cannot be faid to add any thing to the commands of Christ, in fo ordering all the circumstances of publick worship. and by injoining fuch ceremonies to be used therein, as in their judgments may most conduce to the ends of these more general precepts. The laws of Christ descend not to all the particular circumstances, as the laws of Moses did; neither do they fignify to us in particular, what is decent, or expedient; and yet they can be of no use if not applied to the particulars. Who then must judge of decency and expediency, when a question ariseth about any particular, whether it be decent and expedient, or no? Not every one for himself; for that would certainly introduce that confusion and disorder which these rules were given to prevent and keep out: Not the whole body of the people; for how should it be hoped, that they should ever come to a full agreement in their judgments? It remains therefore, that in every nation, the governors of the church must have a power of determining, and fettling an order about things of this nature, observing, as well as possibly they can, the general rules given to this end; which if they do, they who take offence thereat, and refuse to obey their pastors and governors so determining, will (I fear) find it an harder matter, than, it may be, they now think it, to escape the woe denounced against them through whom the offence cometh, or to free themselves from the guilt both of adding to, and taking from the word of God. In condemning that

that which is by no law of God forbidden, as finful and unlawful, they add to the laws of God; and in refusing to obey the orders of their governors in lawful things, and to submit to the authority which God hath given them, they take from it.

Q. What special motive doth God here use to persuade us to keep this commandment?

A. That which we have in these words, For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, &c.

He is the Lord, and that's enough to persuade us to keep all his commandments whatsoever; and this especially touching the manner of worshipping him with an external worship. As he is the Lord to be worshipped, so 'tis he alone, and not man, or any society of men, that is to give laws for the due performance of that duty to him. I am the Lord, (saith he) that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images, Isai, xlii. 8.

He is the Lord our God, who hath vouchsafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, and to take us for his peculiar people: And the people that are thus admitted into covenant with him, he cherisheth, protecteth, and bears a very tender affection to, as to his spouse and wife, betrothed and married to him alone. Such is the church to the Lord, who cherisheth, loveth, and nourisheth her, and is become one with her, Epb. v. 29, &c. The church is married to him who is raised from the dead, Rom. vii. 4. bave espoused you (faith St. Paul) to one bushand, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 2. and Christ's design is to present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish, Eph. v. 27. His dove, his undefiled, Cant. vi. 9. I will betroth thee unto me for ever, faid God to Israel, Hos. ii. 19. Iam married unto you, Jer. iii. 14. The covenant then between God and his people is a marriage

marriage covenant: And hence is idolatry fo often called whoredom and adultery, and idolaters are faid to go a whoring after strange Gods, Deut. xxxi. 16. therefore also is God's displeasure against idolatry. and fuch as are guilty of idolatrous worship, called his jealoufy, and he on this account, a jealous God. They provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images, Psal. Ixxviii, 58. When God heard this he was wroth, and greatly abborred Israel: So that he for sook the tabernacle of Shilob, the tent that he had placed among men, and delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies hand; he gave his people also over unto the sword, and was wroth with his inheritance, ver. 59, &c. Jealousy is the rage of a man, (saith Solomon) he will not spare in the day of vengeance, Prov. vi. 34. There is indeed no fuch furious paffion as this in God: But to shew us, how severely he will punish idolaters, and how tender he is of his worship, he likeneth his displeasure against such to the jealousy of a man who will not spare the offender. Thus, the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of bis jealoufy, Zeph. i. 18. For the fin of worshipping that which is not God, and provoking God with their vanities, thus faith he, A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest bell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on firethe foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them, I will spend my arrows upon them, Deut, XXXII. 22, 23.

Thus God threatens the breakers of this or any other of his commandments, to visit the fins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation, of them that hate him. Where observe, in the first place, that God accounts idolaters as haters of him; even as an adulterous wife can be no better thought of, than as an hater of her husband, whom she wishesh out of the way, that she may the more freely enjoy her lovers. And, indeed, all they who addict

addict themselves to finful courses, are haters of God, as he is their holy and just Lord and Governor. and could heartily with there were no fuch power to over-awe or punish them. Now, if the children of wicked parents tread in their parents steps, over and above the punishment they should otherwise have fuffered for their own fins, God may add fome degrees of punishment, and deal the more severely with them for the fake of their parents; yea, tho' the children prove good and fincere worshippers of God, he may afflict and try them with sharp temporary chastifements, and that to the third or fourth generation, because so long their parents may posfibly, live and be punished in them, by seeing what great afflictions their fins have brought upon their dear children. But God doth not punish the pious children of the most wicked with eternal punishment: no, nor their wicked children neither for the fin of their parents only, but for their own. Every one shall die for his own iniquity, Jer. xxxi. 30. The soul that sinneth, it shall die, Ezek. xviii. 20. And the ordinary rule which God gave to be observed by magistrates in judgment was this, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: Every man shall be but to death for his own fin, Deut. xxiv. 16.

To encourage us to keep this and all the commandments, it is here added, That God sheweth mercy unto thousands, of them that love him, and keep his commandments. He assures all them who obey him in love, of abundant mercy, such as shall run over, and fall upon their children, and childrens children, to many generations, who shall taste of the fruits of their parents love and obedience: You may by this see how gracious a God you serve, how much forwarder he is to shew mercy than to punish.

Q. What is the third commandment?

A. Thou shalt not take the name, &c.

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Q. What more generally is here forbidden?

A. We are forbidden to profane God's holy name, Lev. xxii. 32.

Q. What is the general duty here commanded?

A. We must use God's name as holy and reverend, Psal. cxi. 9. And give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, Psal. xcvi. 8. xxix. 2.

Q. More particularly, Are we to bonour God's name

by praise and thanksgiving?

A. Yes; We must enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise, be thankful unto him, and bless his name, Pfal. c. 4.

Q. Must we bonour it by prayer?

A. Yes; Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved, Acts ii. 21. Rom. x. 13.

Q. Are we to bonour it by finging?

A. Yes; We must sing forth the honour of his name, and make his praise glorious, Psal. lxvi. 2.

Q. May we bonour God's name in swearing?

A. Yes; We are to fear the Lord our God, and to serve him, and to swear by his name, Deut. vi. 13. x. 20.

Q. What is it to swear?

A. To call God for a record, a witness, and a judge, 2 Cor. i. 23. Gen. xxxi. 50, 53.

Q. When may you swear?

A. When an oath for confirmation is necessary to put an end to all strife, Heb. vi. 16.

Q. How must we swear?

A. In truth, in righteousness, and in judgment, Jer. iv. 2.

Q. May you swear ordinarily in common discourse?

A. No; Our communication must be Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil, Matt. v. 37. Jam. v. 12.

Q. Must you not perform your oaths?

A. Yes; We must perform to the Lord our oaths, Matt. v. 33.

Q. May you curse?

A. No; we must bless, and not curse, Rom.

Q. What will God do to the profaners of his name?

A. God will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.

6. In this third commandment God shews us how he expects we should with our tongues, and in words. express the inward honour which we have for him in our hearts. We are here to observe, first, the command given us; and, fecondly, what God threatens them with, that break this commandment. The command is, not to take the name of the Lord our God in vain: where, by the name of God, we understand any fignification of God's nature and perfections, by what words foever; whether by fuch names as JEHOVAH, EL, JESUS, CHRIST, the HOLY GHOST; or his attributes of eternity, power, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy, goodness, and suchlike; or his holy word, ordinances, facraments, and fuch-like. God expects, that we should have so great an honour and reverence for him, as not to take up into our lips, as the phrase is, Pfal. xvi. 4. his name in vain; that is, without any necessity, to no good end and purpose, where there is no just occasion or reason for it, nor any good like to come of it. This were to profane it, and to use it as an unhallowed and common thing; when it is our duty to fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord our God, Deut. xxviii. 58. I am the Lord, (faith God) that is my name, Isai. xlii. 8. I am a great King, faith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the beathen, Mal. i. 14. Holy and reverend is God's name. Pfal. cxi. 9. O Lord our God, bow excellent is thy name in all the earth? Pfal, viii I.

God almost every-where in his word sheweth, how tender a regard he hath to his name, and how he will by no means endure to have it blasphemed, profaned, or any way vilified and dishonoured: That

his name might be great in Israel, and magnified for ever; he chose among them a place for his name to dwell in, even between the cherubins, Deut. xii. 5. P[al. lxxvi. 1. 1 Chron. xvii. 24. Thence he manifested forth his glory: And to make his power, and special providence over his peculiar people the better known, even when Israel sinned most provokingly against him, and he chastised them most feverely by the hands of their enemies on every fide; yet would he not utterly destroy them, lest the idolatrous people who vexed them, should thence take occasion to blaspheme his name; or to despise his power, as tho' their gods or idols had been too strong for him, and had by their power given them the victory over his people. Hence have we frequently such expressions as these; For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For mine own fake, even for mine own fake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another, Ifai. xlviii. 9, 11. The Affyrian oppresseth them without cause. They that rule over them make them to howl, faith the Lord, and my name is continually every day blasphemed: Therefore my people shall know my name, chap. lii. 4, 5, 6. He saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known, Plat. cvi. 8. He divided the water before them, to make him an everlasting name. So didft thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name, Isai. lxiii. 12, 14. Jer. xxxii. 20. I wrought for my name's fake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose fight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt, Ezek. xx. 9, &c. Thus when the Israelites seemed to be in great danger, being encompassed by their enemies, thus spake Fosbua unto God for them, faying, What wilt thou do unto thy great name? Josh, vii. 9. So the prophet feremiab also prayed. O Lord, tho' our iniquities testify against

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us, do thou it for thy name's sake, Jer. xiv. 7. Do not abbor us for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory, ver. 21. Hence is it, that the command, not to profane the name of the Lord, is fo often repeated, as Lev. xviii. xix. xxi. xxii. All this care is taken, that men may have the highest veneration for the divine Majesty, and not dare in any case to mention him, without the profoundest humility, and plainest fignifications of the honour they have in their hearts for him: That they may know, and acknowledge, that be, whose name alone is 7EHOVAH. is the Most High over all the earth, Pfal. lxxxiii. 18. The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose

name is Holy, Ifai. lvii. 15.

Let men therefore praise his great and terrible name, for it is holy, Pfal. xcix. 3. Sing unto God. fing praises unto his name; extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name 7 AH, and rejoice before him, Pfal. lxviii. 4. Take heed, how you do any thing which may fignify that you have but low thoughts of God, or may minister occasion to others of thinking meanly of him; especially see well to it, that you talk not of God, of his word, or his works, his laws and ordinances, flightly, irreverently, contemptuoufly, or any way whereby you may appear to vilify them, and to have little efteem of them: Remember, that the law of God was, that he that blasphemed the name of the Lord, should surely be put to death, Lev. xxiv. 16. It becomes all men that profess christianity, to use all possible care so to behave themselves, that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed, I Tim. vi. I. The command is there particularly given to fervants; and a like command is given to the younger women, Tit. ii. 5. But it doth indeed belong to all christians, tho' for special reasons to those two sorts in those texts. This was the charge laid upon Israel, to take heed, that when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned not his holy name, when they faid unto

them, These are the people of the Lord, and are

gone forth out of his land, Ezek. xxxvi. 20.

If then we will keep this commandment, and not take God's holy name in vain, which too many of us daily do, who yet little think of it; we must abandon all manner of open wickedness, for that is certainly the profaning of the name of Christ, and that holy religion which he hath delivered unto us. Every one that calleth himself by the name of God and Christ. one of God's children, or people, or a christian, and yet liveth an ungodly and unchristian life, taketh God's name in vain: Therefore let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. ii. 19. otherwise he giveth occasion (as David did by his adultery) to the enemies of God to blaspheme, 2 Sam. xii. 14. In like manner, by the vicious lives of christians, the name of God is blasphemed among the infidels, Rom. ii. 24. Too many whereof we have now among us, and fuch as watch to find advantages against us; and I wish I could fay, they had not found very many in the open profaneness of one fort, and the palpable hypocrifies of another fort of people, who pretend each to be zealous for the religion of Christ.

They who preach any doctrine in the name of God, and commend it to the people as his holy word, which God hath no-where taught, do certainly take God's name in vain, and abominably profane it. Such there formerly were, who thought to cause God's people to forget his name, by their dreams which they told every man to his neighbour; and that in the name of God They prophesied lyes in God's name, and of the deceit of their own heart, Fer. xxiii. 25, &c. xxvii. 15. I sent them not, neither bave I commanded them, neither spake unto them; they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, chap. xiv. 14. By God's law of

old fuch were to die, Deut. xviii. 20.

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Again, they who pray unto him, or fing his praises without any hearty devotion; they who honour him with their lips, having their heart far from him; they who make confession of their fins, and beg God's pardon, without true repentance, or full purpose of heart to forsake them, and to mend their lives; they who give thanks, without any obliging sense of his goodness, or endeavour to obey his laws, do certainly take God's name in vain.

And this I have told you, because I suppose it possible, you may meet with some who will go about to persuade you, that if you shall only religiously abstain from perjury and false swearing, you do all that needs to be done for the keeping of this commandment. I shall not deny it, that swearing falsely

mandment. I shall not deny it, that swearing falsely by the name of God, was the thing most directly and principally here forbidden. So the commandment seems to be explained, Lev. xix. 12. Te shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord. And so our Saviour seems to understand it, Matt. v. 33. It bath been said by them in old time, Thou shalt not for swear thyself; but that this is not the only way of taking God's name in vain, I have, I think, said enough to convince you: And, indeed, I shall not need to say much to you about swearing, if you have learned the meaning of those portions of scripture which you

An oath is either used in witnessing or promising, and it is an appealing unto God; a religious invocation or calling upon him, as the great searcher of hearts, as a witness to the sincerity of our hearts in what we affirm, deny, or promise; and, as a righteous judge, declaring ourselves willing to stand or fall by his just sentence, if we say not the truth from the heart, or wilfully falsify in any thing: And

have now recited; yet, that you may the better

understand, both what it is to swear, and how you

are, or are not allowed by God to swear, I shall here

in so doing God is honoured by us, we giving him the glory of his omniscience, of his authority, and of his justice. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and ferve bim, and shalt swear by bis name, was the command in Deut. vi. 13. and elsewhere. If one had delivered a beast to his neighbour to keep, and it chanced to be driven away, hurt, or die, none feeing it; then there was to be an oath of the Lord between them both, that he had not put his hand to his neighbour's good's, Exod. xxii. 11. Yea, before the law of Moses was given, Abraham made his fervant swear by the Lord, the God of the heaven, and the God of the earth, Gen. xxiv. 3. And Abrabam and Abimelec sware each to the other, Gen. xxi, 31. and fo did Laban and Facob, Gen. xxxi. 53. It is plain hence, that oaths by the name of God, were allowed of God, both before and under the law.

And that they are now fo under the gospel, will be as evident, if we consider that there is now the very fame reason for them, and that there is no want of examples of fuch as used them. St. Paul more than once or twice (as he himself telleth us) Sware by God, saying, God is my witness, Rom. i. 9. God is my record, Phil. i. 8. I Theff. ii. 5. I call God for a record upon my foul, 2 Cor. i. 23. Before God I lye not, Gal. i. 20. Nor the apostle only, but the angel also in the most solemn manner, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever, Rev. x. 5, 6. Yea, of God we read thus, The Lord bath sworn, and will not repent, Pfal. cx. 4. By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, Gen. xxii. 16: The Lord of bosts bath sworn by himself, or by his soul, Jer. li. 14. By bis boliness, Amos iv. 2. By bis great name, Jer. xliv. 26. When God made promise to Abraham, faith the apostle, because he could swear by no greater, be swear by bimself. God willing more abundantly to shew unto the beirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, Heb. vi. 13, 17. The

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The reason of an oath is plainly enough told us in the same chapter, and it is this, An oath for confirmation, is to men an end of all strife, Heb. vi. 16. Whatfoever controverfy or dispute ariseth about any matter, when other means fail, this of an oath must either end it, or it cannot be ended; and the best affurance one can give unto another, that he will do as he promifeth, is the confirmation of his promife by his oath: Now in fo doing, men honour God; for in swearing by God, (as was faid before) we acknowledge his dominion over us; therefore faith the apostle, men swear by the greater, Heb. vi. 16. and therefore God sware by himself, because he could not swear by a greater than himself. This, notwithstanding all that some men fay against it, is abundantly enough to fatisfy any confidering man, that an oath by God, is now as lawful among christians, as it was to them who lived either before or under the law.

But what then shall we say to those plain words of our Saviour, and of St. James? I say unto you, faith our bleffed Jesus, swear not at all, Matt. v. 34. And fo St. James, Above all things, my brethren, swear not, Jam. v. 12. I fay, in the first place, that neither our bleffed Saviour, nor St. Fames, did forbid all manner of swearing, howsoever their words at first hearing may feem to do fo. But, first, to swear when there is no necessity of an oath; to be forward to iwear, upon any light occasion, or in a matter of trivial concernment, needlessly, when we are not called to it by good authority; neither is the matter of lo great weight as to deserve it: And this may be the meaning of, Sware not at all; that is as much as to fay, avoid fwearing as much as in you lieth. Above all things swear not; that is, be very careful to frun swearing all that you can. It would therefore well become all in authority, not to make oaths fo common as now they are, nor to call upon men to take oaths, fave in very weighty matters.

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condly, they forbid us to swear by any thing but God, as tho' we thought we might fwear by the creatures without fin. We are forbidden to fwear by heaven, or by the earth, by Jerusalem, by our head. and St. Tames adds, by any other oath; that is, by any fuch-like oath, wherein the creature only is named, as though God were no way concerned in them: Whereas this is a very great dishonour to God, either to appeal to the creatures in fuch cases. which we ought to do to God alone; or to suppose that we do not at all fwear by God, when not he, but fome creature only is named; the contrary whereunto our Saviour teacheth, faying, Whofo shall (wear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by bim that sitteth thereon, Matt. xxiii, 20. &c. Or, thirdly, all swearing in ordinary discourse, and common conversation, is forbidden; a vanity so much now in use, that the most horrid and dreadful oaths are become no more than expletives, words used of course as most fashionable, and helping best to adorn, and give a grace to our speech, tho' they fignify nothing at all, as people commonly use them. Hence faith our Saviour, Let your communication be, Tea, yea; or, Nay, nay; for what soever is more than these, cometh of evil. And St. James faith, Let your yeabe yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. Indeed, it becomes every one, that would be thought a christian, to shew forth that honesty and integrity in his whole behaviour, and to be so punctual in all his dealings, fo true and just towards all men, that he should be mightily out of countenance to be called upon to fwear, and others should even blush to require it of him, and not to be fatisfied with his bare word, his yea and nay.

An oath is so facred a thing, and to call upon the omniscient and righteous God as a witness, and a judge

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judge, a thing fo dreadful, that no man that hath any fear of God before his eyes, will dare to fwear. but when the glory of God, and the good of his neighbour, seem to force him to it. And whenfoever, upon any fuch weighty confideration, he thinks it necessary, and his duty to swear, he will be very careful to observe the directions which God hath given his prophet Feremiah, saying, Thou shalt (wear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, Jer. iv. 2. It is necessary in every oath, that we swear by the Lord, the living God, who liveth for ever and ever; by the Lord, who, as he knoweth whether we fwear truly or deceitfully, so he ever liveth to remember it, and to be a witness of it; and as he cannot forget it, so will he, one time or other, punish them that repent not, very feverely for their profanation of his holy name. Moreover, it is necessary that the words of an oath be used in their ordinary fignification and meaning, fo as it may be clear and manifest to those who are concerned therein, what it is that one either affirms, or denies, or promifeth; otherwise, it is a vain oath, and an abominable profanation of God's name, in calling on him to witness unto that which can be of no use, which it was designed for. It in an oath we use words of a doubtful fignification, we using them in one fense, and intending that the hearer should take them in the other, this is the thing called equivocation, which is nothing elfe, but a deluding and mocking of our neighbour in the name of God, and a perverting of judgment and justice by a shew of religion. The like abuse both of God and men it is, to fwear with a mental refervation, when the words wherein we fwear openly contain a fallhood; which yet by the addition of fuch words, as we have then in our mind, but utter not by the mouth, they become true. This is nothing elfe but a playing with oaths, feeing every one knows that words unuttered, can fignify nothing to others who know them

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not, nor hear any thing of them; and so the end of an oath is lost, which is to certify men of the truth, by declaring it in the presence of God, as witness and

iudge.

It is yet farther necessary, that you certainly know the truth which you bear witness to with an oath: it is not enough that you find no reason to disbelieve it, or to suspect it false, or that you have heard it faid of credible persons, but you ought to have a certain personal knowledge of it yourselves: And if you promise any thing upon oath, you are to be sure that it is in your power to make it good, and that you have a full purpose of mind to perform it, that it be a thing lawful for you to do, and that it will not hinder you from the doing of a greater duty. Take beed bow you lift up your foul unto vanity, or Swear deceitfully, Psal. xxiv. 4. Swear not to do any evil thing, as the fews did to kill Paul, Acts xii. 23. nor to do, what your worldly interest, your pleasure, or any earthly advantage, will probably tempt you to neglect: And if thou hast sworn unrighteously, perform not that oath, for that is only to add one fin unto another. Repent of thy unlawful oath, for fuch an oath cannot bind thee to obedience, only it affords new matter of repentance. We cannot bind ourselves by any act of ours to disobey God, the king, our parents, or any one to whom God hath given a power over us: Therefore be fure, whenever you swear, to see that you do it deliberately; and having confidered the matter well, and finding good reason for what you do, set yourselves before God in all humility, and reverence, and godly fear; behave yourselves after the most grave and serious manner, having your fouls filled with the greatest awe imaginable of the divine Majesty by which you are to fwear. Swear not unadvised and rashly, as Herod did to the daughter of Herodias, to give her whatever she should ask; which proved to be the head of John the Baptift, Mat. xiv. 9. God

that he will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain. Where, by not holding him guiltless, we are to understand, that God will treat him as a guilty person, and severely punish him; more especially such will he punish as prosane his name by swearing salfely. I will (saith God) be a swift witness against all salfe swearers, Matt. iii. 5. The curse goeth forth over the face of the whole earth, and every one that sweareth shall be cut off. It shall enter into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name, and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones

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Beware, I befeech you, of accustoming yourselves to any fort of oaths whatfoever in your ordinary communication and discourse. For often swearing vainly, you learn in a little time to account it an indifferent thing to Iwear at any time, whether there be any occasion for it or no. In common swearing you very feldom confider what you fwear to, a truth or a falshood; nor by what you swear, by God or the creatures. You lose all sense of God's presence, majesty, purity and justice; and of the finfulness of vain swearing; and get such a habit of it, that you can hardly tell how to speak without it; and to forbid you to swear is all one to you, as to command you to be filent. You consider not, how, beside the dishonour you do to God, you render your company very troublesome to all sober persons, to whom you are so rude and uncivil as to be always profaneing that holy name in their hearing, for which they have the greatest reverence in the world, and fo you put them to this choice, whether they will difplease God by patiently hearing you dishonour him; or offend you by rebuking you, or shunning your company, and shewing that they are weary of it. Nay, 'tis certain, that you hereby lessen your own credit and reputation among men, and make your oath altogether

together useless, when it should be most serviceable either to yourself or others; for no man that observes, how you are almost always swearing, and yet never regard what you swear, can think that he hath any reason at all to believe it to be true, on this account, that you have sworn it. Why should any one believe him for his oath's sake, who commonly swears to what himself knows to be false? And then consider again, what's the most dreadful of all, you hereby heap up wrath to yourselves daily, and God will certainly, sooner or later, pour it down upon your heads, if you repent not before the day of wrath and vengeance cometh upon all that do evil.

Q. Which is the fourth commandment?

A Remember, &c.

Q. What is a sabbath-day?

A. A sabbath is a day of rest unto the Lord, Exod. xvi. 23.

Q. What day was that fabbath of rest?

A. In the feventh day is the fabbath of rest, holy to the Lord, Exod. xxxi. 15.

Q. Why was the seventh day made the sabbath?

A. God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that on it he rested from all the work which God created and made, Gen. ii. 2.

Q. How was the fabbath boly to the Lord?

A. Because on it they were to honour him, Isa. Iviii. 13.

Q. How were they to bonour God on the fabbath-

day?

A. The fabbath was an holy convocation, when a double facrifice was to be offered, and on it might be done no manner of work, Lev. xxiii. 3. Numb. xxviii. 10. Exod. xx. 10.

Q. Are christians to give unto God a publick

worship?

A. Yes; We must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but come together in the church, Heb. x. 25. I Cor. xi. 20.

O. Are we bound to keep the seventh day?

A. No; Let no man judge us in respect of the sabbath-days, which were a shadow of good things to come, Col. ii. 16.

Q. What day do christians keep boly?

A. That which is called the Lord's-day, Rev. i.

O. What day is the Lord's-day?

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A. The first day of the week, when the Lord rose from the dead, Mat. xxviii. 1.

Q. How are we to keep the Lord's-day?

A. In praising God, hearing the word, breaking of bread, and prayers, in making collections for the saints, &c. Acts ii. 47, and 42. xx. 7. I Cor. xvi 2, and chap. xi. and xiv.

§. The design of this fourth commandment is this, That a sufficient portion of our time be set apart for the publick worship of God. And here, first, God gives his command; secondly, Directions how to fulfil it; and, thirdly, the reason for it.

1. The command is this, Remember the sabbathday, to keep it holy, Exod. xx. Or, keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath

commanded thee, Deut. v. 12.

2. The directions are in these words, In it thou shalt do not any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

3. The reason we have in these words, Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, Exod. xx. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

That the publick worship of God may be more duly and folemnly performed, and that the ministry which God hath ordained in the church may be of more use; it is very expedient that there be, first. some publick place or places appointed and fet apart wherein the people may meet to worship and receive instruction. And, secondly, That some certain times be fixed and fet apart for the same great ends of worship and instruction. These indeed are no more but circumstances of religious worship; yet did God give express orders for both of them. First, That he might prevent the people's falling into idolatry, he commands them, to destroy utterly all the places wherein the nations which they should subdue served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the bills, and under every green tree, Deut. xii. 2. To overtbrow their altars, break their pillars, burn their groves, bew down the graven images, ver. 3. to destroy all the monuments of idolatry. And ver. 4, he forbids them to worship the Lord their God after this manner as the idolatrous nations did their idols. But, faith he, unto the place which the Lord your God shall chuse out of all your tribes, to put his name there, even unto his babitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shall come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings and your facrifices, &c. ver. 5, 6. Their facrifices being their most solemn part of their external worship, first the tabernacle of the congregation, and after that, the temple at Jerusalem was the place appointed for them. Yet now we christians are not bound by this or any other law of God to any one place more than to another for the celebration of our publick worship. I will (saith St. Paul) that men pray every-where, lifting up pure hands, without wrath or doubting, I Tim. ii. 8. So faid our Saviour to the woman of Samaria, Woman, believe me, the bour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain of Gerizim, nor at Ferusalem, worship the Father, John iv. 21. that is, God's worship shall not be confined to any

any place; but all nations shall be at liberty to chuse and set apart for God's publick worship, such places any where, as shall be judged most convenient for

the congregation to assemble in.

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Secondly, Concerning the time of God's publick worship, it is very evident, that besides the other festivals which they were obliged to observe, the Israelites were commanded (as by this commandment is manifest) to keep a weekly sabbath, or day of rest holy to the Lord. In the book of Genesis, immediately after the history of the creation, which God finished in fix days, Moses hath these words, On the seventh day God ended his work, which he bad made; and be rested on the seventh day from all bis work, which be had made: and God bleffed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because be had rested from all his work which God created and made, Gen. ii. 23. The next time that Moses speaks of the sabbath, was when the whole congregation in the wilderness murmured against him and Auron for bringing them from the flesh-pots of Egypt to kill them there with hunger. When to appeale their murmurings, and to try their obedience, God rained down for them manna from heaven, a fufficient portion whereof he allowed every one together for the present day, and to leave none of it till the morning; but upon the fixth day it happened, that measuring it they found, that they had then gathered twice as much as they had done on any one of the five foregoing days; and consulting with Moses about it, he tells them, This is that which the Lord bath said. To-morrow is the rest of the boly sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning, (a thing which they were forbidden to do on other days) and then on the feventh day eat it; because that day was a sabbath unto the Lord, and they should not find it in the field, Exod. xvi. 23, &c. And when some of them on the seventh day

day went to feek for it, the Lord was displeased with it. Wherefore he faid, See, for that the Lord bath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the fixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every one in bis place, let no man go out of bis place on the feventh day, ver, 29. This command was given about two thousand and five hundred years after the creation of the world, and the ten commandments were given after this; the forth whereof is this, Remember the fabbath-day, &c. Exod. xx. Deut. v. And this commandment we find often renewed. and the Fews reminded of it by other penmen of the

holy scriptures.

The directions given by God for the right keeping and fanctifying of the fabbath-day we have partly in this place, and partly in some other places of scripture, which I now point out unto you. As, first, they are here commanded to keep it holy, that is, by resting on it from all fervile work, Te shall keep the sabbath, for it is boly unto you; every one that defileth it. Shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doth any work therein, that foul shall be cut off from among ft bis people, Exod. xxxi. 14, 15. Abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day, Exod. xvi. 29, that is, out of the camp into the field to gather manna, or to do fuch-like servile work. See Levit. xxiii. 3. days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an boly-day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doth work therein, shall be put to death. Te shall kindle no fire throughout your babitations upon the Sabbath-day, Exod. xxxv. 2, 3. In earing time, and in barvest thou shalt rest, chap. xxxiv. 21. The man who was caught gathering a few sticks on that day, was, by God's order, stoned by the congregation to death, Numb. xv. 32, 36. No burden were to be borne, no victuals to be bought or fold on the fabbath-day, Neb. xiii. 15, 17. Jer. xvii. 21, 27. On the fabbath-days the Tews

Fews had the words of the prophets read unto them in their synagogues, Acts xiii. 27. And Moses of old time bad in every city them that preached bim, that is, his writings, being read in the synagogues every sabhath-day, chap. xv. 21. Where, by reading, we are to understand expounding also, as in our Saviour's reading, Luke iv. 16. And the word of exhortation to the people, Acts xiii. 14, 15. To which we must add prayer, Acts xvi. 13. The fum of all we have in these words of God in the prophet. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my boly-day, and call the sabbath a delight, the boly of the Lord, bonourable, and Chalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord, &c. Ifa. lviii. 13. Such as these are the directions which God gave his people for the right keeping and fanctifying of the fabbath.

Laftly, The reasons why God would have a feventh day's fabbath, are in the fourth commandment these two; the one, Because the Lord hath allowed us fix days in the week to labour in, doing the works of our ordinary calling on them; and therefore it is but reasonable, that one in seven be spent in his worship, without whose blessing the works of our hands cannot prosper. And the other is, because in fix days the Lord finished his works of creation, and rested, or ceased from working, on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord bleffed the fabbathday, and hallowed, or fanctified it. When this law was repeated again, Deut. v. 15. and that by the name of the covenant which God made with them in Horeb, coming to this precept of the fabbath. Moles giveth another reason why it was given them. Remember (faith he) that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that thy God brought thee out thence thro' a mighty hand, and stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the labbath

fabbath-day. And ver. 14. he added, That the man-servant, and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And Again, (faith God) I gave them my fatutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, be shall even live in them. Moreover I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that fanctifieth them, Ezek. xx. 11, 12. The children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a fign between me and the children of

Israel for ever, Exod. xxxi. 16.

You have now heard the fum of what we are taught in the holy scriptures concerning the fabbathday, as it was commanded to be observed by the Tews. Now how far we christians, or any other people in the world besides the children of Israel, are bound to the observation of this sabbath here commanded, is a thing that we are concerned to inquire into. Some things are commanded by God, to which, tho' there had been no fuch express command given, we should have been obliged by the law of nature. And these oblige not only fews or Israelites, but all mankind for ever. And fuch as to the fubstance, are all things in the ten commandments supposed to be, and this of the sabbath among the rest. That is, to give God a publick worship is a natural duty, and for the more folemn and decent performance of this duty, that some certain time be fixed and prescribed, nature itself will teach us; and that there be such a rest or vacation from servile work, that we may have time enough for the due performance of the duty, and our minds more at liberty for it, this too we may be taught by natural reason. Again, there be other things, which, tho' nature could not teach them. God hath by positive laws now made our duty; and thefe are duties to them alone, unto whom those laws are given, and to none other; so that they may be duties to one people, and not

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to any other people besides them; and to that people

too, only for a time, and not for ever.

In this law of the fabbath, we are to consider, that howfoever the light of nature may teach us. that God is to be publickly worshipped, and that some part of our time is to be set apart for that worship, and that so far it must needs oblige all mankind to the end of the world; yet is it very plain, that the light of nature could never teach us, that just a seventh part of our time is thus to be set apart for God's worship, or that the seventh day of the week, from the beginning of the creation, must be that day, or that on that day no fervile work may be done, but that there must be a total cessation from all bodily labour for a whole day together. It must be, I say, some positive law of God that must teach us fuch things as thefe, and it must be shewed that fuch a positive law when given, doth extend to, and was defigned to be a rule to all men, before all men can think themselves obliged to keep it. Whether then this law of the fabbath was given to all men, and that as a rule to them in all the abovementioned particulars, we are next to inquire. And this we are the more concerned to do, because we have some Judaizing christians among us, who contend some of them for the Saturday's fabbath, and others to have our Lord's-day kept as much a fabbath, or day of total rest, as ever the Fewish sabbath was. To fatify ourselves in these things, let us examine the scriptures. And here,

First, considering the words of Moses, Gen. ii. concerning God's resting on the seventh day, we find not so much as any the least express mention made of any sabbath to be kept by men. Of God's keeping a sabbath, that is, resting from his works of creation on the seventh day, we read, but not of his making that seventh day a sabbath of rest to men by any command there given. What is meant by sanctifying the seventh, I will shew you anon. In

the next place, reading the books of Moses and of Job, we find not, that any such day as a sabbath was observed either before or after the flood for two thousand and five hundred years after the creation: nor in any other history can we find, that any people in the world, but the Israelites, ever kept such a weekly fabbath, or indeed that for many ages after this command for a weekly sabbath given to the Israelites, they had any such custom among them as that of measuring their time by weeks, whatsoever some think they have found in some old poets to the contrary; the oldest whereof, are yet some hundreds of years after the Israelites receiving of this law, which was after their deliverance out of Egypt, by the hand of Moles and Aaron. Then, indeed, and then first when God rained down manna to feed them with, Gen. xvi. 29. then faid Moles. For that the Lord bath given you the fabbath, therefore be giveth you on the fixth day, the bread of two days: abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of bis place on the seventh day. Here was a sabbath or day of rest commanded, and too, the seventh day, but it was the seventh day after the raining of manna, and not the fexenth from the creation, unless it may be proved that the creation and raining of manna, were both upon the same day, which, I fear, will be found an impossible thing. We have at least this reason for thinking them not the same; that if the seventh day from the raining of manna was the feventh in course of constant succession from the creation, then the day before the raining of manna must be so too, and so the sabbath of holy rest unto the Lord; but that it was not so, it seems even in this very evident, that on that day God fent them quails which covered the camp, ver. 13. which they might gather for their use.

After this come to be confidered the words of this fourth commandment, Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy; that is, take especial care to keep

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the raining of manna; see Deut. v. 12. The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; that is, the seventh day from the raining of manna: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, &c. and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; that is, because the Lord, after six days work of creation, rested, or ceased from such works on the seventh day, therefore he commanded, that men, after every six days labour which he had allowed them, should rest on, or cease from such works on the seventh; which seventh he blessed and hallowed for an holy sabbath to himself.

Let it then be granted, (what I think ought not to be denied) that God did from the beginning determine, that the Israelites should, after their deliverance out of Egypt, observe a sabbath after every fix days of labour; and farther, that the fathers before and after the universal deluge, had amongst them some publick worship of God, and did set apart from their worldly affairs, and bodily labours, fome parts of their time, to meditate on the works of God, to praise him for his goodness to mankind, to pray unto him for the continuance of his bleffings; though that either they made use of the seventh day from the creation, or had any certain stated time, fuch as a feventh, eighth, or any one of a certain number of days, which they constantly tied themselves to, is more than we can now know. Granted it must be, that the Israelites were bound to keep every fevench a fabbath, after the raining of manna; and possibly they did so, I dare not say that certainly they did, even to the coming of our bleffed Saviour in the flesh: Yet will it not hence follow, that all, or any other people but the I/raelites, were obliged to keep this seventh day's slabbath; neither that the Israelites themselves, either did at any time, or were commanded to keep the seventh day in course from the creation of the world; but rather

every seventh day after the first raining of manna: This, I say, is very probable, and the contrary is that which, at this day, cannot certainly be known by any one; and this is answer enough to all such as earnestly contend for the necessity of keeping a seventh day sabbath, in a constant course from the creation.

But now, having granted, because we cannot deny it, that the Israelites were to keep a seventh day sabbath, from the raining of manna, and that it is this sabbath which is here commanded; we are next to inquire, how far we christians are obliged by this command.

6. When the law of the ten commandments was given to the children of Israel, the very preface to it feems to tell us, that it was given to that people only: For to what other people could God fay, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the bouse of bondage? And tho' these commandments are for the main, and as to the moral duties commanded in them, and the fins forbidden, the laws of nature, and on that account oblige all mankind and christians, no less than Fews: Yet I cannot see what should hinder it, but that fome positive laws, and those too relating only to the circumstantials of those duties, might be here and there intermingled with them, as they were especially given to that people, which God had chosen from out of the rest of the world for his own peculiar. He might well give them peculiar laws, to the observance of which he never designed to oblige any other people, and founded on such reasons as were not to be discovered elsewhere, and therefore could not be reasons for his giving such laws to any befides them: And fuch a law I think this of the fabbath to be, in a twofold respect; that is, of the seventh day, and of the strictness of the rest upon that day; both which might well be to difcriminate

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criminate that people from all others, or to be distinguishing marks fet upon them, whereby they might be known to be his peculiar, over whom he exercised a more especial providence, and unto whom he youchfafed extraordinary bleffings and privileges, and by whom therefore he would be worshipped after an extraordinary manner. Six days God allowed them to gather the manna wherewith he miraculously supplied their wants in the wilderness; and six days they might always labour, and do all that they had to do; but on the seventh day they must not do so, but trust to, and rely wholly on his providence, who had promised them on the fixth day, to give them the bread of two days, acknowledging that they lived not by bread alone, but by the word of God, that God who had chosen them to make unto himself a glorious name by his visible care of them, as he had thitherto done by delivering them, and conducting them fafely, in the most miraculous manner, out of Egypt to that place, Deut. v. 15.

In Ezekiel, (as you have heard) besides those statutes and judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and in these must needs be included all the moral laws of God; mention is made of the fabbath as a diffinct thing, and withal, the end for which God gave it, or added it to the statutes and judgments of life. Moreover also (faith he) I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them, or separate them from other people to be my peculiar, an holy nation, a priestly kingdom unto me. It is a fign between me and the children of Ifrael, Exod. xxxi. 16. It feems by these and the like places of scripture, that the law of the sabbath was given to the Israelites only, as a token and constant memorial of the peculiar covenant between God and that people, to take an especial care of them as his own chosen people, and to be unto them, in a more eminent and remarkable manner, their God.

Again, God in the same 20th chapter of Ezekiel, complaining of the disobedience and revoltings of that people, thus saith, ver. 16. The bouse of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, be shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: And then, ver. 24. he addeth, For their heart went after their idols: Hereby, again, it seems very plain, that this law of the sabbath was given them as a badge and character of distinction, whereby it might be known to what Lord and Master they belonged, and that they were worshippers of the only true God, and not of idols, as others were.

I have already observed, that no other people in the world but they, had any fuch thing as a fabbath day, neither knew the measuring their time by weeks: And yet the whole world being peopled by fons of Noah, it may well feem strange, that if Noah and his fons were wont to keep a fabbath, this cultom should in no nation be preserved by tradition. Now I add moreover, this observation to the former; That tho' we find God by his prophets frequently threatening feverely to punish the heathen nations for their idolatry, and fundry forts of abominations, whereof they were guilty, yet we never find any of them, that I know of, so much as once reproved (as the Israelites very often were) for their not keeping of a labbath-day; to these no law was oftener inculcated, or inforced with feverer penalties; nor were they oftner reproved for any thing (except for their going a whoring after idols) than for violating the law of the fabbath, even as if the whole weight of religion had laid on the strict keeping of the sabbath-day.

Observe in the next place, That when our holy and blessed Jesus was come in the slesh, to saves corrupt and wicked world, by purifying and resoming it, we do not find, that either He or his apostles

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after him, did at any time either reprove the Fews for their not keeping the fabbath fo strictly as they had been commanded to do, or that he gave unto christians any command at all for the better observation of it. In his fermon on the mount, Mat. v. vi. and viith chapters, wherein his principal business was to bring his followers to a right understanding, and right christian way of keeping the law, and to free it from the misinterpretations of the Fewish doctors, who by their traditions had mightily corrupted it, we meet not with any thing relating to the fabbath-day, which may feem very strange to any one who considers what he reads in the prophets concerning the fabbath, if it were given to oblige christians. The sons of the stranger, that join themselves unto the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants; every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh bold on my covenant; even them will I bring to my boly mountain, and make them joyful in my bouse of prayer, &c. Ifa. Ivi. 6. And again, If ye will not bearken to me, to hallow the fabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Ferusalem, and it shall not be quenched, Jer. xvii. 28.

Our blessed Saviour indeed, as did also the apostles, went unto the synagogues to worship God on the sabbath days, as we find Luke vi. 6. xiii. 10. Acts xviii. 4. They joined with the fews there in prayers, in reading the law, and in whatever other parts of their service were common to them and christians. But as for all parts of religious worship peculiarly christian, they did not perform them in the temple or synagogues, but at home, or from house to house, and not on the seventh, but first day of the week, Acts xx. 7. ii. 46. Our Saviour thus frequented the temple and synagogues on the fewish sabbath, because being himself, as man, made under the law, it became him thus in his own person to

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fulfil all righteousness, Gal. iv. 4. Mat. iii. 15. Even the righteousness which was of the law, under which, as a child of Fewish parents, he was born. And the same did his apostles, as for the same reafon, because they being Fews were to live in obedience to the law till it was abolished; so also in compliance with the Fews, as far as they might, that thereby they might win the more of them unto Christ, as was St. Paul's practice afterwards, 1 Cor. ix. 20, 84 Thus both Christ and his apostles did, that they might thereby gain the fairest opportunities of doing good, of preaching the gospel, and openly confirming it by their miracles wrought in the fight of the people, as Luke vi. 6. xiii. 10, &c. However, we do not find, in all their preaching, any command, or indeed the least intimation of a sabbath to be kept by christians on the seventh day, or indeed express mention of any other day to be observed by them in the room of it. All that we find them doing in this matter is this, That they reproved the superstitious rigour and strictness of the Pharifees in the keeping of the Fewish sabbath; and that when they were accused by those zealots for the law, for profaning that day, they vindicated themselves by a right interpretation of that law, John v. 17. ix. 16. Mark ii. 24, &c. Christ tells them, That the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, ver. 27. That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath, ver. That God will have mercy, and not sacrifice Mat. xii. 7. That it was lawful to heal, to pull a beaft out of a pit or ditch, to loofe and lead him out to water, and in a word, to do well on the fabbath-days, Mat. xii. 11, 12. Luke xiii. 6. xiv. 5. He made clay, and anointed the blind man's eyes, when with word only, or less than that, by merely willing it, he could have made the blind to fee; he also fent him to wash in the pool of Siloam, John ix. 6, 7. He commanded the impotent man to rife, and to take up his bed, and walk, and go unto his house, Mat. ix. 6. And St. Paul hath taught us, That no difference

difference of days is now to be made by christians, as obliged to one more than another, by any law of Moses, Rom. xiv. 5, 6. Te observe (faith he) days. and months, and times, and years, Gal. iv. 10. And this, ver. 9. he calls a turning again, and being in bondage to weak and beggarly elements; and adds, ver. 11. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. He faith, No man ought to judge us, christians, in respect of an holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-days; which (faith he) are a shadow of thing's to come, but the body is of

Christ, Col. ii. 16, 17.

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From all this, we may be well affured, That we christians are not now bound to keep the sabbathday in all points, as the Jews by the law of Moses flood obliged to keep it. And that, as it was given to them, it was but a shadow, type or figure of fomething to come by Christ. And what that is, we may competently learn from the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. Where, ver. 1. christians are bid to fear, or to take heed, having a promife left them of entering into God's rest, lest any of them should seem to come short of it, as some of their forefathers had done, thro' unbelief, chap. iii. 18, 19. For (faith he) the gospel, or good news of a rest to the people of God, hath been preached to christians as well as to fews, ver. 2. And as many of them as believe, do enter into that relt, ver. 3. But what rest is this? Not the sabbath-day's rest on the seventh day after the creation, neither the rest of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, whereinto they that believed, and died not in the wilderness for ther unbelief, entered under the conduct of Foshua; for it was after both these, that God thus spake by the prophet, Harden not your bearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest, Psal. xcv. 8, 11. There remaineth therefore yet another R 4

rest for the people of God, Heb. iv. 9. Whereof the former were but shadows. As God at first ceased on the feventh day from the fix days work of creation; wherefore he afterwards commanded the Ifraelites, after every fix days of bodily labour, to rest a seventh, in a thankful commemoration of the creation of all things, of the rest God had given them from their Egyptian flavery, of his supplying their wants in the wilderness with manna from heaven: So the eternal Son of God, by whom all things were made, having finished the painful work of our redemption, rested from his own work, the redemption of finners, at his refurrection from the dead, on the first day of the week, as God had done from the work of creation on the feventh, ver. 10. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God, And we which have believed do enter into rest, ver, That is, we christians, or believers in Christ do by him enter into rest, a spiritual rest begun here on earth, and hereafter confummated in glory; the rest promised by Christ, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour, and are beavy laden, and I will give you reft. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in beart, and ye shall find rest unto your fouls, Mat. xi. 28, 29. And whereof the apofile speaks, saying, It is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: but to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Fefus shall be revealed from beaven, with his mighty angels, 2 Theff. i. 6, 7.

What shall we say then? Are not we christians obliged to keep some set day, or portion of our time, weekly, for the solemn worshipping of God? And are we not to cease from the works of our ordinary callings, and from our bodily labour, for the better performance of our religious duties? To this I shall, from what hath already been said, answer by degrees

in these following propositions.

i. It is the duty, not of christians only, as before we have shewed it was of the fews, but of all mankind,

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kind, publickly and folemnly, where they can, to worship God, in offering praise and thanksgiving. learning his will, and praying for grace to do it; adoring the perfections and excellencies of his incomprehenfible nature, admiring and thankfully acknowledging all his wonderful works of creation and providence, and supplicating for his bleffings, as he is the Father of every good and perfect gift, in whom we live, and move, and have our being. The end of this commandment is to keep religion, or the sense of a God, and of our duty to him, alive in the world. to preserve sincere piety in its full strength and power, vigour and efficacy; which will very hardly be done, without the fetting apart some portion of our time, and affigning some certain days for the performance of religious duties after a more folemn manner in publick affemblies. Take sticks out of the fire, and lay every one by itself, and the fire in it will quickly be extinct; but lay them all into the fire again together, and they will burn as well as ever: And thus it fares with christians, the devotion of fingle persons alone is too apt to cool, which will gather new warmth in the publick congregation of worshippers.

2. In all equity and reason, we christians ought to be more liberal of our time to this end of religious and publick worshipping of God, than the Israelites or any other people, in as much as it hath pleased God much more clearly to reveal himself and his persections unto us, to vouchfase unto us the substance of those things, whereof they had but the shadow; and we enjoy many excellent privileges and advantages, which they knew little of; and on many accounts have much more to bless and praise God for; we have as many sins to be pardoned, as corrupt a nature to be purified, as many needs and wants to be supplied by God's bounty, grace, and goodness, as any of them. If then, by God's command, the Israelites, after every six days labour, were ordered

to fet apart a feventh day to be devoted to God's worship; we christians cannot think it fit to put him

off with a less proportion of ours.

3. The particular time or day of publick worship. being (as the place also is) only a circumstance of it. and no effential part of it, is upon just grounds a thing mutable or alterable; and where it cannot be proved, that God by some positive law hath unalterably fixed it, may be changed for another. Now. tho' God had without all dispute, in his law given to the Yews, ordered the fabbath to be on the feventh day, (whether from the creation, or raining of manna, it is not needful here again to inquire) yet that, at least in all circumstantials, whereof the particular time is one, it was given with an intent to oblige all men to the world's end, and not the Fews only to the end of their commonwealth, and destruction of their temple, it will be hard for any one to prove; and the contrary hath, I think, been sufficiently proved already.

4. That it hath been the constant custom of the church of Christ, from the very beginning, to worship God publickly, not on the seventh, but on the first day of the week, called sunday, or the Lord'sday; tho' some few, not yet sully satisfied in the extent of their christian liberty, might for a time keep the saturday too; is a matter that is not to be questioned. And it is not conceivable, that the primitive and purest ages of the christian church, should presume thus to change the day, which by God's own command was hallowed, into another, without very good authority for it; and such they had from the practise of the holy apostles, who kept the first day of the week as their day of publick worship, and in all probability by the order and appointment of

their Lord Jesus Christ. For,

5. Jesus Christ hath ordained a publick ministry in his church, and set up therein an order of men to minister under him to the end of the world: And the

the apostles, whom he ordained to be his first and chief ministers therein, and whom he fent out into the world, as his Father had fent him; took care in every place where they, by their preaching, had converted any number to the faith, to ordain elders over them to feed the flock of God; and they gave to these instructions how to behave themselves both in doctrine, discipline, and conversation; and particularly taught them what orders to observe in their publick affemblies, as appears abundantly from the epistles to Timothy and Titus, and from the eleventh and fourteenth chapters of the former epiftle to the Corinthians; to name no more now. Whence 'tis evident, that they had some times for publick assemblies for religious worship; and as by their practice it appears, the day which they observed was not the feventh, but the first day of the week, as will be

shewn fully in what followeth.

6. It is very probable, that this change of the day was made by our Lord's own order, who, as was faid, declared himself to be Lord of the sabbath-Of him we read, That after bis resurrection, he sheeved himself forty days, giving commandment to bis apostles, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 2, 2. They being to advance his kingdom; that is, his church, he in that time, from his refurrection to his afcention, gave them directions about all things belonging thereunto; and who can imagine, that in fo doing, he should fay nothing of the time of publick worship, one of the principal things belonging to his kingdom? Our holy Jesus rose again from the dead on the first day of the week, and on that same first day, after his appearing to the women at the fepulchre, he appeared to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and from Moses and the prophets preached to them his death and refurrection, Luke xxiv. 25, &c. And then he took bread, and bleffed it, and brake, and gave to them; and was known to them by breaking

of bread, ver. 30, 35. This looks very like the work of a christian sabbath. The rest of the disciples were at that time assembled at Jerusalem: To these, in a furprizing manner, he also appeared, convincing them of the truth of his refurrection by their fenses, and preaching the doctrine of it out of Moles, and the prophets, and his own prediction when alive amongst them, ver. 37 ad 48. He then renewed unto them the promise of the Holy Ghost, and gave them his commission for the work to which he sent them, Mark xvi. 14, &c. together with a power to work miracles, ver. 17, 18. Again, a fecond time on the felf-same first day he appeared unto them more privately affembled, confirming them in their faith of his refurrection, and giving them the power of remitting and retaining fins, John xx. 19, &c. After this, on that day fe'nnight, his disciples, together with Thomas, who before had been absent, were again affembled, and Jefus appeared again among them as before, ver. xxvi. On the day of pentecost, they were all with one accord in one place, Acts ii. 2. There was then a very great assembly; and then were the apostles all filled with the Holy Ghost, ver. 4. as Christ had promised; and this was the first day of the After this, St. Paul preached at Troas, to the disciples, assembled on the first day of the week to break bread, Atts xx. 7. and he gave order to the Corinthians, as he had done also to the Galatians, That upon the first day of the week, every one should lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, for the relief of the diffressed brethren, I Cor. xvi. 1, 2. And hence from the religious affemblies held upon that day, is it called by St. Fobn, the Lord'sday, Rev. i. 10. For what other day can be understood there meant by him, but the first day of the week, it will be very hard for any one to fhew us.

Well, then, from all this we gather, that as we are men, we are bound to praise God for all his benefits common to mankind; to adore our Maker and

Preserver;

Preserver; and to beg his bleffing on the whole natural brotherhood; to render him thanks for our life, motion, and being, and for all the helps and means of preserving these, and rendering them more comfortable to us; to meditate on his wonderful works of nature, and the adorable excellencies of the great Author of them; and to endeavour to get the fense thereof so deeply imprinted on our souls, as that they may become indelible, and influence us in our whole behaviour; and some part of our time it is necessary for us to bestow on these things. But as we are called to be christians, and have bound ourfelves by our vow and covenant in our baptism, it is altogether necessary, in order to our keeping of this most folemn and facred vow, that we learn, what are the works of the devil, and the pomps and vanity of the wicked world, and the finful lusts of the flesh, which we renounce; what are the articles of the christian faith, which we are to believe; and what the holy will and commandments of God, which we are to keep and walk in as long as we live; what are the motions of corrupt nature which we are to refist; what the passions of mind we are to govern and fubdue; what the temptations we are to avoid or conquer; what the arms of our foiritual warfare; And because of the depravation and averseness of our nature from all that is good, and pleafing to God, we stand in need, not only of being once taught, but of being often quickened, excited, and fpurred on by proper motives feafonably and earneftly preffed home upon us, drawn from the reasonableness of our living in subjection to the Author of our being, and from our obligations to him to love and gratitude for mercies already received; and, finally, from the hopes and fears of future good and evil, rewards and punishments; moreover, confidering the troubles attending this mortal life, and the dangers which our holy religion may expose us to. we have need by all forts of arguments to be encouraged

raged unto perseverance, and christian fortitude, and to be enlivened to patience and meek fuffering of persecutions, by mutual exhortations, and the joint prayers of the faithful. It is very fit that some confiderable portion of our time should be set apart for all this; and Christ having called us in one body. Colof. chap. i. as hath been shewn before, we are on certain days to come together in the church, I Cor. xi. 18. thereby declang ourselves to be members of that holy fociety whereof Christ is the head, and that there is no schism amongst us; but that we endeavour to hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Eph. iv. All this being our indispensible duty, whatever proportion of our time, whatever day of the week the universal church of Christ shall. either by virtue of those instructions which our Lord gave to his apostles after his refurrection, or according to the christian liberty from Fewish observations and ordinances, agree upon to be kept holy to the Lord; the same doth the command of the church oblige every christian religiously to observe.

7. Tho' we christians are not bound to that strict bodily rest, which was commanded the fews, that being (as was shewed you) typical, and a shadow of fomething then to come: Yet the very nature of the duty commanded requireth of us fo far to rest from all worldly employments, as that we may the better attend upon the spiritual duties of the Lord's-day, to be performed either most publickly in the church, or less publickly in our family, or secretly in our closets. For besides the religious duties more solemnly to be performed in the publick assemblies, whereof you had some account before, it is fit that servants and children should be taught at home, and prepared to bear their part, and making farther progress and improvement in the publick affemblies of God's worshippers; which cannot be so well done there without a great deal of confusion and disturbance to the publick service, unless such preparation go before at

home. And besides this, every one hath a confcience to look to, and examine well, and to be preserved clear and good, and many fins to find out, be humbled for, confess, and unload his foul of, by repentance, and renewing of his vows; and many personal bleffings every one hath to call to rembrance, and to thank God for; all which things are enough to employ all the time any one hath to spare from other duties, in the closet. Seeing then, that our wordly business all the week-time is of a nature so widely differing from our spiritual; and seeing that the provision, which because of our present necesties, we are to make for the things of this present life, have fo little affinity with the provision for the life to come, that it rather hinders and disables us from taking so much care of it as is needful; our fix days labour for the body being apt to draw off our minds too far from our thoughts of God, of our bleffings from him, duties to him, and preparations to enjoy him; from that care we should have for our souls, and aspirations after heaven, and eternal blessedness: Seeing the things below are apt to cool our affections towards the things above, on which they should be most fixed, and so to put us quite out of tune for spiritual exercises; it seems very necessary, that at least once in feven days, this especially being the proportion of our time which God did of old fet out for that purpose, we should go aside and retire from the world, recollect our diffracted thoughts wandering to and fro therein, fix them in the devout contemplation of God, and his glorious attributes, his wondrous works of creation, providence, and redemption, grace and glory; and in stedfast resolutions to live for God and heaven, and to make fure of eternal blessedness, whatever becomes of us in this life. This will be a tuning of our fouls again after much disorder, and putting them into a right temper for the service of God all the following week.

In short, we are, after every fix days of labour, to keep a seventh holy to the Lord: This whole day is, as well as we can, and as works of necessity, charity, and mercy will suffer us, to be spent in religious exercises; parents, masters, and mistresses, and all in authority, are bound to take care that their children, servants, and all who are under their command, thus keep the Lord's-day.

And this I take to be enough to give you a right understanding of the four first commandments, wherein you are taught your duty immediately towards God. We shall now proceed to the second

table.

Q. What is the fifth commandment?

A. Honour thy father, &c.

9. The decalogue, or ten commandments, as you were told before, is divided into two tables, the former containing four commandments, flewing us what is our duty to God; and the latter containing fix commandments, shewing us our duty towards our neighbour. The former containeth in it the laws of piety or godliness; and the latter, the laws of justice or righteousness, and sobriety. Having explained to you the four laws of piety contained in the first table, I am now to explain also the fix laws of the fecond, which shew us the duties of justice towards our neighbour; that is, towards all men, in what relation foever they stand to us, so as they come within the compass of our power to do them right, or as we have any dealing with them. Thus hath our bleffed Jesus, in the parable of the good famaritan, Luke x. 29. answered the question there asked him, Who is my neighbour? The poor man, who lay wounded by the thieves, was to be taken for a neighbour to any one that found him, and could afford him any help, shewing mercy, and having compassion towards him; and he that did so was to

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be accounted his neighbour; as the Samaritan did, binding up his wounds, and taking care of him, tho' he was of another nation and religion, and of that people between whom and the Jews there was a professed enmity; shewing us, that tho' we are more especially to do good to the houshold of suith, yet are we to account all men our neighbours; and as we have opportunity, do good unto all men, as St. Paul exhorts, Gal. vi. 10. Even though they be our enemies, yet are we to feed them, Rom. xii. 20.

But tho', as we are men, we are all to respect one another as neighbours; yet is there a more special neighbourhood among men, which is founded upon some special relation of one to another; and hence, besides all those common duties due to all men as our neighbours in general, there are others properly belonging to them, as they stand related in an especial manner one to another. As we are the rational creatures of the fame Almighty God, all of us alike. and equally depending on him for all things, and bound all alike to yield an intire obedience to his will, and are to do our duty to him in the first place; as he is the supreme Being, Maker of, and Lord over us and all things; and God hath made us all, high and low, rich and poor, of one blood and brotherhood, descending all from the same common parents of all mankind, Adam and Eve; and fuch as shall always stand in need one of another, and capable, in one kind or other, of affifting and being useful to each other as brethren by nature; and these common duties which we naturally owe to all, if we do not mutually perform, there can be no civil fociety, nor good neighbourhood amongst us; but we shall live in this world, as if God fent us hither only to vex and plague one another; so are we more nearly related to some of our common neighbours than to others, and owe them some special duties, which we owe not unto them, unto whom we are not in the same manner related;

related; and if we pay them not these, there can be

no good order, nor government among men.

Some persons by the wise ordinance of God, and even by the law of nature, are superiors, and se above others, and are to have some kind of authority and command over them: Whence it must needs follow, that some persons are inferiors, set below, and in subjection to others; and of which soever of these two forts of persons we be, superiors or inferiors, we owe duties mutually each to other. Next therefore unto God, the supreme Governor of all the world, we are to be instructed in our duty towards them, whom God hath fet over us in this world, with authority to govern us under himfelf. And these are in the nearest, tho' not in the highest relation to us, our natural parents, our fathers and mothers, of whom we were begotten and born: These are expressly named, because they are most obvious to every one; yet, under these two words, father and mother, are comprehended all fuperiors. fuch as are our civil father and mother, all kings, queens, and inferior magistrates and governors; our spiritual or ecclesiastical parents, pastors, teachers, and governors in the church; masters and mistresses of families, tutors, guardians, instructors; and all who in age, rank, virtue, or any good quality excel us: All these we are to honour, reverence, obey, and to behave ourselves humbly towards them, paying unto them whatsoever by nature, or God's institution, we owe them. And these duties, what they are in any relation, you must now give good heed to learn.

Q. Is it a christian duty to honour our natural parents?

Q. Is it a sin to despise them?

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A. Yes; Honour thy father and thy mother, is the first commandment with promise, Eph. vi. 2.

A. Yes; Cursed is he that setteth light by his father, or his mother, Deut. xxvii. 16.

Q. Must you obey their commands?

A. Yes, in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord, Col. iii. 20.

Q. How must you behave yourself to your parents for

their care of you?

A. I must labour to requite my parents, for this is good and acceptable to God, I Tim. v. 4.

Q. What's the chief duty which parents owe unto

their children?

A. Parents must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4.

Q. Are they not to provide for their livelihood in

this world as well as they can?

A. Yes; If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an insidel, I Tim. v. 8.

Next unto the one God and Father of all, Eph. iv. 6. who is not the Father of our flesh only, as our natural father, but the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9. we owe most unto our natural parents. Jui very being we derive from God by them, and as God hath made them under himself, the next and immediate causes or instruments of our being; so hath he also given it in charge to them, to contribute all that is in their power to our well-being and happiness both here and hereafter. It is indeed one of the most unnatural things in the world for any father or mother not to love, care, and provide for the wellfare, both temporal and eternal, of their children, as well as they are able. Even evil parents (faith our bleffed Saviour) know how to give good gifts to their children; so that if a child ask bread, he will not for bread give bim a stone, Luke xi. 13. And hence the love which parents by nature have for their children, is in an especial manner called by the name of natural affection, as tho' this were an affection infeparable from our nature; and indeed to be void of it, is so inhuman a thing, that it is worse than brutish, most brute creatures being as tender and care-

ful of their young ones, as of themselves.

When the apostle tells us unto what vile things God gave up the heathen people, for their not honouring him according to that measure of knowledge which by nature they might have attained to, he mentions amongst the rest, the want of na. tural affection, Rom. i. 3. And this again he reckoneth among those sins which make perilous times, 2 Tim. iii. 3. Yea, when God would commend the greatness of his love to his children, he expresseth it by way of comparison with the love which parents have for their children: If ye, (faith Christ) being evil. know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall your beavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? God styles himself the Father of the fatherless, Pfal. Ixviii. 5. And like as a father pitieth his children; even so the Lord pitieth them that fear bim, Pfal. ciii. 13. I am (faith God) a Father to Israel, Jer. xxxi. 9. And our Saviour encourageth us to pray unto God, by teaching us when we pray, to fay, Our Father, Luke xi. All this most plainly shews, that it is a very natural thing for parents to have a very great love for their children. And fo indeed we find by experience, that they generally have of one fort or other, and think they can never shew it enough.

But, alas! as our nature is now by fin depraved and corrupted; it betrays this corruption as much in this love of parents to their children, as in any thing else whatsoever. For the love which most parents have for them is a very corrupt love, and (I think I may say) a love which doth no good; but both corrupteth the nature of their children, and contributeth to the growth and daily increase of corruption in every generation, more than any one

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The whole Religion of a Christian. thing in the world. It manifesteth itself commonly no otherwise, than by a most unreasonable and foolish fondness for, and pampering of them; in forbearing to correct and chaftise them for their faults, in a fear to cross or vex them, whilft they learn to do evil, and to delight in wickedness; in encouraging them in their childish vanities, and longing appetites; and in letting them have all their own wills and humours; fuffering them to command when they should be learning to obey, and to feed those appetites and lusts, which they should teach them to govern and mortify.

The chief care of parents should be fit, as well as they can, their children for a bleffed eternity; to teach them their dependence on, and obligations to God, how to ferve him in love, and be, to thankful to him, and contented with his allowance, labouring to make them the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. To this end they should have much in their thoughts that wife faying, Train up a child in the way be should go; and when he is old be will not depart from it, Prov. xxii. 6. Bring him to custom of living religiously, which broken. may not be eafily Remember often the command which God gave to his people of old, Thou shall teach them (he means his laws) diligently to thy children, and talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, Deut. ix. 7. IV. IO.

And as for temporal good things such as are needful for the body in this world, the apostle supposeth it as a thing unquestionable, that parents ought to lay up for their children, 2 Cor. xii. 14. That is, doing withal according to their ability all other things which God hath made it their duty, as opportunity is offered; amongst which the nourishing, and well educating of their children, is alway one, and one of the chief too; what yet remains of what God hath bleffed

bleffed them with, is to be laid up, or bestowed in making a competent provision for their children. that thereby they may have the means of living and doing good in their generations. Another thing he also supposeth, which yet is too much neglected and abused to their childrens ruin; that they take care to chastise and correct them, when they do amifs, Heb. xii. 7. It was the direction given by Solomon, With-hold not correction from the child, Prov. xxiii. 13. He that spareth bis rod, hateth bis son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him, betimes, chap. xiii. 24. Chasten thy son while there is hope, let not thy foul spare for his crying, chap. xix. 8. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it from bim, chap. xxii. 15. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his

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foul from bell, Prov. xxiii. 14.

Seasonable and moderate correction is as necessary for children and young people, as their meat and drink; but then parents ought to use a great deal of discretion and prudence, in giving both due correction and food. Many parents, not able to deny their children any thing they call for, quite mar the healthful temper of their bodies, and thence unawares grow ill habits of gluttony and drunkenness; yea bring them to that pass, that they are sick whenever they are temperate and fober, and cannot be fatisfied with a less meal, than would be abundantly enough for two or three fuch men as eat and drink only to preferve bodily life and vigour; and this they do not only in feeding them to excess; but by allowing them unwholesome things which they love, and even things wholesome at unseasonable times; even so may indifcreet parents spoil the tempers of their minds, either by too much or too little, by too gentle or too fevere chastisement; by pitying them too much for their crying and peevishness, and not enough for their natural infirmities. You ought therefore to correct them, but not in passion, or rafhly,

rashly, without sufficient reason for it, nor, as the apoftle expresseth it, after your own pleasure, and not confidering whether 'tis likely to be for their good, the thing which our heavenly Father doth in his chastisements principally intend, Heb. xii. 10. Many are severe beyond all reason, even unto furiousness, for a little trifle which is cross to their own humour, and yet have hardly fo much as the mildest reproof for vice and wickedness. Parents in correcting their children ought principally to aim at making them good, and the faithful fervants of God, in whose bleffing only they can hope to be happy. And always they are to take care, that their chastisements be moderate, and given feafonably. Te fathers, (faith the apostle) provoke not your children to wrath, Eph. vi. 4. Lest they be discouraged, Col. iii. 21. Lest you lose their good opinion, and filial affection, and they begin to look upon you as persons whom they can never hope to please, tho' they do their utmost endeavour to humour you, and regard not their welfare, but your own humour; and to you losing all your authority with them, they betake themselves to desperate courses to their own utter ruin, and their forrow when it will be too late.

Such unconsidering people shew themselves very unnatural to their children, and most grievously sin against God, who hath made them especially their charge and care, that instead of imitating faithful sather Abraham, who commanded his children, and his houshold after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19. not only make this the least part of all their care; but on the contrary, suffer them without any rebuke or restraint at all, yea and some of them with delight and commendation, to go on in a vicious and prosane way of living. When they see them do (as was said before) any little thing, that is disagreeable to their own sinful humour, or that is not modish, and genteel, or such as they call unmannerly, they presently fall into

heats, chide and beat them unreasonably; yet tho' they see them hourly doing wickedly, as when they hear them lye, and swear, and curse, and such-like, they shew no displeasure at all at them for it, and truly the reason hereof is too often plain enough, which is this; the reproof they give them resects upon themselves, who by their own ill examples have taught them, it may be, all that is found re-

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proveable in them.

Again, many are so little sensible of their own wants and shame, and of the great necessity of what they want, and because of that their own misery, that they feem very well contented, that their children should inherit their shame and misery, and should grow up in ignorance of all their greatest concerns: They are not themselves able to give them instruction, and as little willing that others should do it for them; they understand not the worth and necesfity of what they themselves want; and therefore they think any charge that they must be at in procuring it for their children, to be more than it is worth; nay, there are not a few, who feem afraid, lest by being trained up in the holy religion of Christ, they should be brought too much out of love with this world, and learn that piece of ill husbandry, (as they esteem it) to count all things which were gain to them before, but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord; and therefore they will not trouble themselves to send them about fuch an unprofitable business, as that of being catechized or instructed in the church, when called and invited to it, lest they should learn to believe that there is an incorruptible and eternal inheritance in the heavens, of infinitely more value than that of this world would be, if they could enjoy it.

Thus, indeed, it is undeniably at this day, that many parents are so intirely and earnestly bent upon serving themselves, that they exercise none of that care for their children, which they are by God com-

manded

manded to have of them: They have learned to love nothing but the worst things they know; that is, themselves: And whatever they pretend in words, they have in truth, devoted all that ever they have, to their own all-devouring lufts, of one fort or other. People are grown fo excessively fond of their own backs and bellies, or elfe their chefts, that thefe idols confume daily all that is ready, and oftentimes more than is their own: They command all the time, and care, and love, and pains, and the very childrens bread out of their mouths; yea, the health, strength, comfort and life of them who are addicted to their fervice; fo that they leave them nothing to bestow on their childrens good education, or to put them into some honest way of shifting for themselves in the world. Whether they themselves shall be saved or damned: whether their children shall be eternally happy or miserable; whether wise or fools, virtuous or wicked, of ability to fubfift of themselves, or mere beggars, what care they? fo that their own either covetousness, or pride, or luxury, be provided for, and the swine well fed, all is well enough. So. little mindful are many parents of any duty owing by them to their children.

Notwithstanding all this that I have said, you who have parents must know, that tho' it may be your hard fortune to have such parents as too much neglect you; yet is it your duty, in every particular, so to behave yourselves towards them, as God in his holy word hath commanded you to do: You must see to it, that you honour and reverence your parents, whether they be good or bad, and so to carry yourselves towards them in all the outward signs and tokens of humility, as to shew that you are sensible of your obligations to them; that you own yourselves, next to God, to be beholden to them for your very being; that you love them even as branches which sprang out of their loins, and by their care and pains, are grown up to what you now are; that

you very willingly obey all their just commands; and, as there may be need of it, succour and relieve them, bear with their infirmities, tho' you suffer something by it, and that you hide and conceal from all others, as far as with a good conscience, and with justice you may, all their faults and failings. Take heed, how by any kind of irreverent words or actions, you do so much as seem to set light by them, how much soever you may in place and honour now be advanced above them. King Solomon, in all his greatness and splendor, rose up to meet his mother Bathsheba, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right band, I Kings ii. 19. Yea, our blessed Jesus lived in sub-

jection to his parents, Luke ii. 51.

You must obey all the lawful commands of your parents, how unnaturally foever they behave themfelves towards you, and fubmit yourselves to their government and instruction. My fon, (faith Solomon) bear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother, Prov. i. 8. A wife fon heareth his father's instruction, chap. xiii. I. But a fool despisetb it, chap. xv. 5. The eye that mocketh his father, or despiset to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it, chap. x. 17. vide xxiii. 22. Curfed is be that fetteth light by his father, or his mother. And all the people shall fay, Amen, Deut. xxvii. 16. God's law was, That he that (miteth his father, or his mother, should be furely put to death; as also be that curseth his father, or bis mother, Exod. xxi. 15, 17. Lev. xx. 9. His lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness, Prov. xx. 20. No pretence of Corban, or a religious vow, or of doing more good fome other way, can excuse one from relieving his father or mother, Mat. xv. 4. None must dare, under the pain of God's curse, to discover, expose to derision, or make a mock, or a jesting matter, of his father's shame, like wicked It Cham, Gen. ix. 22.

It istrue indeed, that in certain cases which may happen, you are not bound actually to obey the commands of your parents, tho' in no case are you allowed to dishonour them. For should they be. as it is not impossible that some of them may be, so wicked and unreasonable, as to command you any thing contrary to the laws of God, or against the good laws of the present government under which you live, or any thing which tend to the injuring of your neighbour, or the undoing, or great hurt of yourfelf or family, this were to exercise an authority over you which God never gave them; who made them instruments of your being, but not disposers of your persons in all things according to their own pleasure, tho' it shall tend to God's dishonour, your neighbour's hurt, the disturbance of government, or your own either great hurt or undoing. If therefore they shall command you to embrace a religion, which, being able to judge for yourselves, you are convinced to be a false one; or to side with them in a rebellion, or to enter into marriage with one, whom you know to be of a wicked life, a peevish and cross temper. of furious and ungovernable passions, and not to be pleased with what is just and reasonable; on which accounts you can fee no ground of hope of a christian and comfortable life, or that you shall be mutual helps, but rather plagues to each other; or if parents shall command what in all probability will destroy your health, and disable you from doing good in your generation, or to live in peace and fafety; in all fuch cases you are at liberty to disobey. But then remember, it must be with all expressions of humility, modelty and reverence; yea, and of grief, that you should be thus forced to contradict their commands. You must very humbly offer your reafons to their confideration, and even on your knees beg of them, that they would ponder them, and not load you with unreasonable injunctions.

You may in some cases think yourselves obliged to reprove your parents for the fins whereof you fee them daily guilty, and fo working out their own damnation. And truly those children that see their father or mother running in hafte to hell, cannot be thought to love and honour them, if they use not the best means they can to reclaim them. Yet must they not prefume to do it by way of reproof, but by way of humble petition; or rather not at all in their own persons, but by getting the minister to do it, or at least some very pious and discreet neighbour, or near relation. And if none fuch can be found to undertake that friendly office, it will become them to do it as well as they can, without giving offence, or shewing any manner of disrespect, and that (as was faid) by way of humble advice and request, begging it on their knees to confider what they fay, and to take care both of their own falvation, and of the welfare and comfort of their family: And laftly, endeavouring in their whole life and converfation to make themselves examples to those, who should have been examples to them, and to shew them how much they in earnest abhor, and fear to practice fuch vices as they fee them guilty of, fo labouring to make them ashamed of their evil deeds. wherein they fee their children afraid to imitate them, or in any measure comply with them.

Q. Thus far you have given an account of the duties which you owe to your natural parents. Now tell me the duties which are due from you to the fathers of your country, as their subjects? What duty owe you to kings, queens, and inferior magistrates?

A. Every foul, or person, must be subject to the higher powers, not only for wrath, but also for con-

science sake, Rom. xiii. 1, 5.

Q Are you to obey the king, and all that are in au-

A. Yes; We must submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.

Q. Must we obey them, when they command things which God hath forbidden, or forbid things which be

bath commanded?

A. No; We ought to obey God rather than men, Atts v. 29.

Q. Is all rebellion forbidden?

A. Yes; They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation, Rom. xiii. 2.

Q. Are you to contribute freely towards the main-

tenance of the government?

A. Yes; We must pay tribute to whom tribute, and custom to whom custom is due, Rom. xiii. 7.

Q. Must you pray for your governors?

A. Yes; Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks must be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, I Tim. ii. 1, 2.

Q. What is the duty of kings and magistrates?

A. To be ministers of God for good to men; and revengers to execute wrath upon him that doth evil, Rom. xiii. 4.

Q. What kind of persons ought they to be?

A. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.

Q. What should be their chief care?

A. They should be nursing fathers and mothers, that men may load quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, I Tim. ii. 2. Isa. xlix. 23.

It concerns us all to take notice of the command given to all christians by St. Peter, in these words, Fear Gad, bonour the king, I Pet. ii. 17. God is first and above all things to be feared, and

his laws constantly to be obeyed by all men. No power in heaven or earth can dispense with us, or exempt us from our obedience to God, or to Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; but we must obey the gospel of Jesus Christ in all things. Let therefore the power under which we live be what it will, we must not obey it in any thing that's contrary to the law of God. But in the next place we must know,

It is God's will, that we should all live under government, and not licentiously, every one doing just as he listeth, and what is best in his own eyes. Without civil government, we should be like herds of cattle pushing and goring one another; or rather like the wild beafts of the forest, preying upon one another, and the stronger devouring and eating up the weaker. But it is the will of God our Maker, that we should live like brethren in love and peace, helpful, and as it is in our power, ferviceable one to another. And so indeed, when we consider well of it, we shall find it very needful for us, and our interest to do. For our present state and condition in this world is fuch, that without the help of others, none of us can well subsist of himself. And such also is the corruption of our nature, that we are all of us apt to be too selfish, and very indifferent what mischief we do to others, or how much they suffer, so that we get for ourselves the things we love and defire. To prevent which great mischief, God hath ordained, that men shall live under civil government, and that the governors shall be furnished with such powers as are necessary to enable them to keep their people in good order.

It was never God's defign, that government should be an intolerable burden, but indeed a very great benefit and advantage to the people. And he cannot be supposed to have had more regard to the advancement and glory of some certain single persons, or families of men, than to the common fafety of man-

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kind, or welfare and prosperity of whole nations. Much less can we suppose, that he stripped himself of his supreme and absolute authority of ruling and disposing of all things according to the good pleasure of his will, by authorizing any person or family of men, to govern under him as his ministers, arbitrarily. It is therefore the most presumptuous, and indeed, ridiculous thing in the world, for any power upon earth to assume and arrogate to itself the monstrous prerogative of being absolute and ar-The Lord, and he only, is God of all the bitrary. kingdoms of the earth 2 Kings xix, 15. He is Lord of lords, and King of kings, Rev. xvii. 14. He removeth kings, and setteth up kings, Dan. ii. 21. There is no power but of God, and the powers that be, are ordained of God, Rom. xiii. 1. Jesus Christ our Lord is the Prince of the kings of the earth, Rev. i. 5. Hence God gave the command, that the king, when he fitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, shall write him a copy of the law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites, and it shall be with him, and be shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and thefe flatutes to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right-hand, or to the left, Deut. xvii. 18, &c.

Princes therefore ought to behave themselves as nursing fathers and mothers to the people, Isa. xlix. 23. They ought not to feed themselves, but their flocks. Not to eat the fat, and cloath themselves with the wool, and kill them that are fed, Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3. but provide as well as they can for the safety and happiness of the people committed to their charge, that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. They ought to see that the religious worship of God be upheld, frequented and countenanced, according to the gospel of Jesus Christ

Christ; and that justice and judgment be duly ministred throughout their dominions. To these ends they are to take care that schools of good learning and academies be founded and fufficiently endowed therein for the better education of youth, and the fitting of perfons to succeed one another in the offices both of the ministry and magistracy; that these have sufficient maintenance and encouragement; and that all fuch as misbehave themselves in their places, may be brought to condign punishment, well amended, or removed.

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You may read what care good king David, the man after God's own heart, took about the well ordering of God's publick worship, I Chron. xxiv. and xxv. And how his fon king Solomon turned out Abiathar the priest for his rebellion, I Kings ii. 26, 27. You read of good king Josiah's zeal for the reformation of whatfoever in his predeceffor's days had been abused and corrupted, and for the restoring the pure worship of God according to his laws, 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii. Of Jehosaphat's sending Levites into the cities of Judah to teach the people, 2 Chron xvii. 7, 8. And of Hezekiah's care to restore religion, and to have the Levites fanctified for their

charge, 2 Chron. xxix. 4, &c.

Princes are to remember, they are not fet up by God over men to be a terror to good works, but to the evil, Rom. xiii. 3. That they should not bear the sword in vain, but for the protection and fafeguard of their obedient subjects, and the impartial execution of judgment on the rebellious, and to be revengers to execute wrath upon them that do evil, ver. 4. To appoint good and conscientious judges under them, and to give them the like charge as King febosaphat did, 2 Chron. xix. 5, &c. Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord

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Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. Princes must not oppress the people with unnecessary and unreasonable burdens : The prince that wanteth understanding is a great oppressor; but be that hateth covetousness, shall prolong his days, Prov. They are not advanced, that they may xxviii. 16. with impunity take their own pleasure, or feed their own infatiable lufts as long as they crave, fearing no check from any man for abusing themselves, and shine forth gloriously to the eye of the world in the spoil and pillage of their people. It is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes frong drink, left they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judg-

ment of any of the afflicted, Prov. xxxi. 4.

But now, after all this which hath been faid of the duty of governors, whether they be supreme or subordinate, and howfoever they may abuse the power and authority, which God hath given them; it behoves you to be mindful of all that which God hath made it your duty to perform unto them. The ministers of Christ have a charge given them, and therefore you are to take it well from them, when they shew their obedience thereunto, to put the people, whom they teach, in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates, Tit. iii. 1. You are to honour the civil powers with the highest fort of civil honour, as persons who are advanced by God to be his chief officers in the management of the affairs of this world. And in all things wherein God hath given them authority to command; yea, and in some things also wherein they go beyond that authority, supposing only that the things be fuch, as are not against any law of God, but fuch as may without fin be done, tho' they be great grievances, and unreasonable burdens, yet are we bound for peace and government's fake to yield our obedience; remembring that if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully, this is thank-worthy, 1 Pet. ii. 19.

And here let me give you this feasonable warning, that you be not led away from your obedience to the present higher powers, by them who (of what church or persuasion soever they be) are wont to talk much and plaufibly against the doctrine of passive obedience. and non-refistance. Whatever kindness these men may pretend to have for the publick good, their principles are certainly very pernicious to all government, utterly inconfistent with it, and altogether irreligious. They are fuch as are impatient of any government which costs them any thing, or allows them not to have their own wills. There must be government in every nation by the ordinance of God; in every government there must be a supreme power, wherefoever it is lodged; and to call it supreme, and yet at the same time to say it may be resisted, is no better than a contradiction, or mere nonsense. There is no power but of God: the powers that be, or the present powers, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore relifteth the power, relifteth the ordinance of God, and they that refift shall receive to themselves damnation, Rom. xiii. 1, 2. So hath St. Paul very plainly told us. But what can damnation fignify to them, who think no hell can be worse than that of being restrained by government from taking their pleafure? There's hardly any thing much regarded by them who talk fo loudly against non-resistance, but their worldly estates and freeholds, their liberties and properties in these, and not being made to pay any thing out of their purses, or to pinch their lusts for the publick welfare.

Do you learn of Christ to submit to the powers, that be, to give unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God the things that be God's, Mat. xxii. 21. If the chief governor degenerate into a bloody tyrant, learn of Christ how to behave yourselves towards such a governor; who, tho' he had millions of angels at his command ready to fight for him, and could with a word have made the earth to swallow

up, or the fire from heaven to consume in a moment, all that were sent to apprehend him, yet would not suffer St. Peter's zeal for his master to make any refistance; but thus checked it, Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword, Mat. xxvi. 52. And he hath promised a blessing to those that suffer for righteousness sake, Mat. v. 10. Pay therefore unto your governors tribute and custom freely, and make no resistance. Grudge not at the payment of any thing that is necessary for the upholding of the government, and the enabling of your governors to protect their

subjects, and to administer justice.

Remember that it is God (as you have before been taught) that putteth down one, and setteth up another; that disposeth of the kingdom as the sins of the people deserve. For the transgression of a land; many are the princes thereof; but by a man of underfanding and knowledge, the state thereof shall be prolonged, Prov. xxviii. ii. He often giveth a king in bis anger, and takes bim away in his wrath, Hos. xiii. 11. It becomes us therefore, when we fee a nation ill governed, not to murmur at God's providence, not to talk against our governors, much less rebel against them; but to submit to the just punishment of our fins, to repent of what is amiss in ourselves, to amend our evil ways and our doings, whereby we provoke him to fet them that hate us to rule over us, Lev. xxvi. 17. Pfal. cvi. 41. For now they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the Lord; what then should a king do to us? Hof. x. 3. Remember the command, Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people, Exod. xxii. 28. repeated Acts xxiii. 5. It is a part of the character given to false teachers: That they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, or of persons in authority, 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8. You are in duty bound to do what is in your power for the fafety and prefervation of the persons of them whom God hath set over you, and by no means to offer any violence un-T 2

to them; following herein the good example of David, who, whilft he was actually a subject to Saul, tho' defigned by God to be king in his stead; yet would not lay violent hands on him, who fought to kill him most unjustly, and without any cause at all, no not when God had brought him into his hands, and he had his life in his power; but religiously abstained from doing him any harm. The Lord forbid, (faid he) that I should do this unto my master the Lord's anointed, to firetch out mine hand against him, seeing be is the anomited of the Lord, I Sam. xxiv. 6. And again, Who (faith he) can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? The Lord shall Smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle and perish. The Lord forbid that ! should firetch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed, I Sam XXVI. 9, 10, 11.

Q. What is your duty to your Spiritual pastors and

teachers, who are your fathers in Christ?

A. We ought to know or own them as fet over us in the Lord, and to esteem them highly in love for their work's sake, I Thess. v. 13.

Q What is their work?

A. It is to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over which God hath made them overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, Acts xx. 28.

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You were taught before, that the church of Christ, and his kingdom here upon earth, are one and the same thing. A kingdom, I say, the church of Christ is in this world, but not a kingdom of this world, John xviii. 36. It is a spiritual kingdom, the subjects whereof are not governed by the laws of men, but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Eph. iv. 17. By the gospel of Christ, which is therefore called the word, and the law of the kingdom, Mat. xiii. 19. xxiv. 14. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, I Cor. xii. 13. And this

this one body is the mystical body of Christ, Eph. i. 22, 23. He is the only head of the body the church, Col. i. 18. And he gave by his Spirit, some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the saith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the ful-

ness of Christ, Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13.

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Now all christians are members of this mystical body of Christ, and Christ hath taken order, that they should no more, like children, be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the light of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, Eph. iv. 14. But that they may all speak the same thing, and that there be no divifions among them; but that they be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment. I Cor. i. 10. And to this end, and also for the more folemn celebration of the publick worship of God among christians, Christ hath ordered, that they affemble themselves together as well as they can, and that they partake together of the ordinances of Christ in his church, and learn there the laws and privileges of his kingdom. And because it is not possible that all the members of this spiritual lociety should meet together for these ends in any one place; they must of necessity distribute themselves into several congregations, and every one of these congregations must have some pastor or teacher to rule, and instruct them, and to minister all the ordinances of Christ among them, and to present their prayers and praises to God, so preventing the confusion and disturbance which would unavoidably arise in the church by every one's speaking for himself. And yet, notwithstanding this distribution of christians into several assemblies under one pastor or teacher in each of them; because all the members T 3

thus distributed and headed, are no more but members of the whole body; it is necessary to testify this their unity, and to prevent all schism in the body, or any farther division or separation of the members one from another, than is necessarily required for the folemn performance of God's publick worship; and that it may be feen, that notwithstanding such a local separation of some members from others, yet all hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; that as many of these congregations, as can conveniently come under the care and inspection of one fingle person, and be, as there shall be occasion, visited and ordered by him, should be united under that one spiritual governor, or bishop, whose office it is to see, that every particular minister in his allotted station do his duty both in life and doctrine, and that all fuch both ministers and their congregations be kept under a wholesome discipline, and that the laws of Chrift and his apostles be well observed in every of them, that so all may hold the same faith, and live by the same rules in an holy christian communion.

To all your pastors and teachers you are commanded to submit yourselves, because they watch for your fouls, as they that must give account, Heb. xiii. 17. And it is their duty to feed the flock of God, taking the overfight thereof, not by constraint, (which I would crave leave thus to interpret, that is to fay, not as persons driven upon this course of life by necessity, or not knowing how otherwise to get a livelihood in the world) but willingly (that is, after due confideration of the gifts and abilities which by God's bleffing they have attained, and what way they may make the best improvement thereof to the glorifying of God, and doing good unto men, they make it their deliberate and free choice to minister to the fouls of men in the church of Christ, and to gain with their talents as much for their Lord as possibly they can); not for filthy lucre, (or in hope to grow rich and great in the world) but of a ready mind (a forforward inclination and resolution to do unto Christ the best service that he hath made them able to do in his kingdom); neither as being lords over God's heritage, (proudly and imperiously domineering over the people which God hath committed to their charge) but be ensamples to the flock, (going before them as good and faithful guides in the christian paths of piety, justice, and sobriety, in love, and kindness, and humility; in self-denial, temperance, meekness, and in all manner of spiritual and holy conversation, wherein they should teach others to walk, I Pet. v. 2, 3.)

It is their business, whilst they are able, to preach the word in feason and out of season, (constantly and affiduously, not publickly only in the solemn assemblies, but privately, as there is occasion) reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine, 2 Tim. iv. 2. And yet 10, as not to strive, or be contentious; but to be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meeknes instructing those that oppose themselves, 2 Tim. ii. 24. To be vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, no brawler, nor covetous, I Tim. iii. 23. Examples of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Giving attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; taking heed to themselves, and to their doctrine, continuing in them, that so doing they may both save themselves, and them that hear them, 1 Tim. iv. 12, 13.

I have the more largely insisted on the duty of your spiritual ministers, lest you should think me partial to mine own calling, as tho it were set up only to lay heavy burdens on other mens shoulders. You cannot but see by what hath been said, that the work of the ministry is a very painful work, and a burden which no mean strength is able to bear. And if all this that you have heard be indeed the minister's duty, and if they undertake so hard a task for your sakes, it must needs follow, that you owe a duty to

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them too; the sum whereof you have said to be this, That you esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. For certainly there cannot be any work in the world, that calls for more prudence, vigilance, industry and courage, than theirs doth, nor can there be any more needful or beneficial to you. therefore no men can deferve more honour and love from you, than your pastors and teachers do, who constantly thus labour, and diligently watch for your fouls. You ought therefore with a most ready will to fubmit yourselves to be ruled and taught by them, and to take heed that you by no means difcourage them, or disable them to do their duty as they should and would do; that you be not disobedient, stubborn, idle, or regardless of their good and wholesome admonitions and exhortations. If it be their duty to teach, it must needs be as much yours to learn; if they must take care to govern you by the laws of Christ, it must needs be your duty to obey them; if they must give you good example, and shew you the way to heaven, by walking before you in it, it must needs be your duty to imitate them in all goodness, and to follow them in that way wherein you fee them walk according to the laws of our holy Jesus. I beseech you, (saith St. Paul) be ye followers of me, I Cor. iv. 16. Again, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ, chap. xi. I. Brethren, be ye followers together of me, and mark them which walk lo, as ye have us for an ensample, Phil. iii. 17. It is too fadly true indeed, that it is not fafe for you to follow the example of all ministers; for all of them walk not as they ought; therefore St. Paul adviseth you to mark them who walk so, as they had him and the rest of the apoftles for an example; and again, not fimply to follow them, but only as they were followers of Christ. It is therefore in their doctrine, rather than in their lives that you are to follow them, and to behave yourselves toward them, as our Saviour commanded the people to behave themselves towards the scribes and

and Pharisees, who sitting in Moses's seat, and whilst they preach according to his law, were to be followed in their doctrine. All therefore what soever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not, Mat. xxiii. 2, 3. If you regard not, neither obey your pastors and teachers, their labour will be all lost upon you, and you deprive yourselves of the benefit of it. In vain are they set to teach, govern, and lead such as will not

learn, obey, nor follow.

It is your duty to account of your pastors and teachers, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, I Cor. iv. I. As of those, who have his commission and authority for what they do, and do it in his name. And therefore you are to remember and ponder well those words of his, which he spake to them whom he fent abroad to preach the gospel: He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth bim that sent me, Luke x. 16. In not hearkening unto, or disobeying the king's officers, who have his commission to act under him, it is certain, that we despise the authority of the king, in whose name, and with whose authority they come. Remember then, that if you come not at the call of your pastors to be catechised, or instructed by them in the principles of your christian religion, to hear the word of God preached by them, to receive the holy facraments, which they administer; if you come not to join with them in their prayers and praises on the days which are by the church fet apart for that end; you thereby shew your contempt of Christ, and of the Father, who fent him. And again, if you separate from your lawful ministers, and, to please your itching ears, run after others who are not legally called to that office in the church; and not enduring found doctrine, because it is not delivered in a way most agreeable to your fancy, or after your own lusts, (or because it pleaseth your humour better) beap

beap to yourselves teachers, 2 Tim. iv. 3. you not only contradict the defign of the ministry, which (as you have heard) is to bring you all to the unity of the faith, and to keep you from being toffed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, Epb. iv. 13. but you contemn Christ's authority in his ministers, who are to teach you his doctrine, and you hold not to the head of the body the church; but dividing from the body, you depart from the head too; or will have two bodies with one head, which is monstrous. That the body continue the one body of Christ, it must be fitly joined together, and compasted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part. So it groweth up into Christ the head, and maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love, ver. 15,

It is also your duty, who are taught in the word, to communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Gal. vi. 6. Otherwise, as you despise Christ, and God in Christ, by not hearing and obeying your teachers; fo you do also in not affording them a fufficient maintenance, and thereby also deceive yourselves, as tho' you thought God might be mocked; but he will make you very fadly fensible of it at last, that he will not be mocked by you, but what soever a man soweth, that shall be also reap, ver. 7. This duty of fufficiently maintaining the ministers of Christ, the apostle Paul very largely treateth of, I Cor. ix. shewing it to be very just and reasonable. If we (faith he) bave fown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing, if we shall reap your carnal things? ver. 11. The Lord bath ordained, that they which preach the gospel, shall live of the gospel, ver. 14. Whatfoever therefore the laws of the land, whereby all men hold their estates, have allotted for the minister's portion, that is become their right by the law of God, and is to be faithfully and fully paid them, without any trouble, or molestation, or seek-

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ing for advantages against them, or any cunning shifts or shufflings to defraud, or deprive them of any part of what is thus made their due in obedience to the ordinance of God.

You may by this fee, how foolishly the quakers reproach the ministers of Christ by the name of hirelings, for challenging that maintenance only, which in obedience to God the laws of the land have affigned them, even as tho' they had a mind to shew the world that they have the Holy Ghost speaking in the scripture, and the Lord Jesus speaking by the mouths of the preachers of the gospel, in derision. The labourer is worthy of his hire, faith Christ, Luke x. 7. And St. Paul applieth to the same purpose what the law of Moses had ordered, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out the corn, Cor. ix. 9. A power and authority to demand a maintenance of the people to whom they preach, all ministers have, as St. Paul in that chapter proves. And tho' some ministers, being able otherwise to maintain themselves, are rather willing to deny themselves (as St. Paul was) in not making use of this power, than by an exacting of all their dues, beget in the people a prejudice against them as covetous persons, and on that account become uncapable of the benefits of their ministry, thinking that they had better want it, than pay so dearly for it; yet do you take heed how you thus abuse their goodness to your own hurt, and think yourselves excused from your duty, by their unwillingness to be a greater burden to you, than necessity compels them to be. Tis a most vile and wretched abuse of their kindnels, to ground upon it a prescription against their right, as too many amongst us are forward enough to do, making the minister's not using his right, an argument against any such right in him. We have not used this power, faith St. Paul, but suffer all things, lest we should binder the gospel of Christ, ver. 12. He used it not indeed, yet nevertheless he

had it, and might have used it, if it had pleased him; tho' for a very good reason he chose rather not to use it. His not using it, was no acknowledgment that he had it not, but a witness of his zeal for the good of those towards whom he ministred. He was content even to suffer the want of many things; yea, and to put up patiently wrongs done him; lest his ministry should prove less effectual by his righting of himself. Men are indeed generally so wholly addicted to the world, and so much more careful for their bodies than for their souls, that they grudge to part with any thing that's pleasant to, or useful for the body, for the maintenance of the ministry, or for the necessary sood of their souls.

You are concerned to take heed, how you be tempted by persons of this irreligious temper of mind. Irreligious I call it; for, whatever pretences fuch people have for their being thought religious and godly, it is certain they are not fo. For whofoever they be that grudge to do any thing, how costly foever, which Christ hath commanded them to do. have no true godliness in them; but the world sits uppermost in their hearts, and is the great idol which they have fet up there to worship. If we put such persons as these in mind of the duty I am now speaking of, they are apt to fay, That we preach not Christ, but ourselves; that it is our own gain which we feek, and not their falvation. What now must we do in this case? This is part of the gospel which by Christ we are commanded to preach, and woe be unto us, if we preach it not. We must tell you of this your christian duty amongst others, whether you will do it or not, or whatever you think of us for dealing fo plainly and faithfully with you. If it be at present our profit, that in obedience to our Lord we preach unto you, what he hath commanded us to preach; it will not, I am fure, be your profit in the end, that you think the worse of us for it, and will disobey the laws both of Jesus Christ, by whom alone you can hope to be faved,

The whole Religion of a Christian. 285 faved, and of the kingdom wherein you are subjects.

Q. How are servants to honour their masters and

mistresses?

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A.. Servants must count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed, I Tim. vi. 1.

Q. Must they obey their commands?

A. Yes; Servants must be obedient to them that are their masters according to the flesh, Epb. vi. 5.

Q. Ought they not then to be true and faithful to

them?

A. Yes; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, Tit. ii. 10.

Q. Do masters owe no duty to their servants?

A. Yes; Masters must give unto their servants that which is just and equal, Col. iv. 1.

6. That which you are here in the first place to take notice of, is this, That our bleffed Saviour did not by his gospel abolish the distinction of masters and fervants, which was in the world before his coming. But it is as lawful as ever it was for others, that christians be servants, unto christians especially, that they may thereby get for themselves and families a sufficient livelihood. The business of Christ was to reform a wicked world, and amongst others to make fuch a change in the minds and manners both of masters and servants, that they might be instruments of one another's welfare: That neither masters should delight in tyrannizing over their servants, laying on them unreasonable burdens, and using them cruelly; nor servants be stubborn, diforderly, nor grudgingly go about their business. That all men, whatfoever their state and condition be in the world, whether they be masters or fervants, should be careful to serve God acceptably, and rejoice in the hope which he hath fet before them, of a most blessed state in heaven. Masters

and fervants there were in the world before Christ's coming into it; fuch there yet are, and fuch, I am persuaded, there will be to the world's end. fo be we live as we ought to do, good and christian lives in any state, we shall be without all doubt ac-

cepted of God, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are all baptized into one body, whether we be bond or free, I Cor. xii. 13. And whatfoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free, Eph. vi. There is neither bond nor free, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 28. Therefore let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called: supposing only that one's calling or profession be honest, and no way inconsistent with the law of God: if in that calling or profession he was first called by the preaching of the gospel to the christian religion. and so admitted into the church of Christ, in the fame calling he may freely still abide. If he was a servant before he was a christian, he may continue a fervant now he is a christian. Art thou called being a servant? (faith the apostle) Care not for it, be not troubled in thy mind, as tho' thou wert a worse christian for that; but if thou mayst be made free, use it rather: for it may be a great advantage to thee in the service of God, to be less under the command of men; however remember this for thy comfort. He that is called in the Lord being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise be that is called, being free, is Christ's servant: Te are bought with a price, be ye not the servants of men, I Cor. vii. 20, &c. Have ye been bought, or constrained thro' necessity to become fervants to others? And have ye now made some shift or other to redeem yourselves, and recover your freedom? First, be careful, that whilst you are in flavery and bondage, you remember that you are bought with the price of the precious blood of Christ; and therefore ought not to do any thing contrary to his will and pleafure, or to be fo much the servants of men, as to be less for that the servants and fide of i ber fin

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vants of God. Again, secondly, remember to use what lawful means you can to regain your freedom: and when you are made free to continue fo, confidering the advantages you have by your freedom of doing better fervice to God. However, remember, thirdly, that being redeemed from death and fin by the price of redemption which Jesus Christ hath paid for you, you do not again willingly enflave yourselves to the will and command of unbelievers. or indeed of any fort of men. But keep to yourselves the liberty which God hath given you of serving him in holiness and righteousness without fear

all the days of your life.

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In the next place, as you should not, having been called in freedom, unnecessarily become servants to any one, and least of all, to an unbeliever; fo, if it happen to you to be called to christian faith, whilst you are the fervants of believing masters, grudge not to serve them, and rather do them service the more willingly for this reason, that they are believers. and therefore beloved, and partakers of the benefit, I Tim. vi. 2. Let them obey them with fear and trembling, with fingleness of heart, not with eyeservice, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ. doing the will of God from the beart; with good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, Eph. vi. 5. Col. iii. 22. Pleasing them well in all things. not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, Tit. ii. 9, 10. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God, I Pet. ii. 18, 20.

As servants owe a duty to their masters, so do masters also to their servants. Masters and mistresses, or dames, are to remember, that tho' their fervants be their inferiors, in the relation of master and servant, and owe them a duty of obedience and fervice; yet are they equal in the common nature of mankind .

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mankind; and tho' they be under them in their outward worldly state, yet, if they be good christians, it may be they are above them in their spiritual state. and more honourable in the eyes of God. therefore it becomes all masters and mistresses to treat their fervants mildly and lovingly; and touse them as brethren, not as flaves. God always in his laws feems to have had a special regard to servants; commanding that their masters should use them civilly and justly, and not, as too many do, cruelly and inhumanly. The Israelites were not to compel any of their own nation to serve as a bond-servant, Lev. xxv. 39. Thou shalt not (faith God) rule over him with rigour, but Shalt fear thy God, ver. 43. And again, Thou shalt not oppress the hireling, or a hired fervant. At his day thou shall give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it, Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. The wages of him that is hired skall not abide with thee all night until the morning, Lev. xix. 13. God will be a swift witness against them that oppress the bireling in his wages, Mal. iii. 5.

St. Paul exhorts masters to forbear threatening, knowing that their Master also is in heaven, neither is there any respect of persons with bim, Eph. vi. 9. It becomes not masters always to frown, and look with a four face, and menacing countenance, on their fervants; nor to domineer over them, as tho' they were dogs rather than men, always throwing hard words at them, and vexing them in an infulting and fcornful manner. And tho' fometimes, through human frailty, their passion be kindled against them, and break out into threatening language; yet should they quickly suppress and extinguish it, and not give way to it, nor put in execution all that they have so threatned. Masters are to remember, that they also have a Master in heaven, whom they have often provoked; and yet he hath neither threatened always what we deferve, nor dealt as feverely with us as he hath threatened; if he did, our case would be very miferable, uf-

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ferable. Masters therefore on earth should shew mercy to their offending servants, because they always stand in need of the mercy of their Master in heaven. God will not shew more mercy and savour to any in the judgment on this account, that he hath been a master unto others, nor will he shew the less to any one because he hath been a servant. He is no respecter of persons. Whosoever he be, that sheweth no mercy, to him no mercy shall be shewed, fames ii. 13. Tho' we be not all fellow-servants to the same men, yet we are to the same great God and Master of all.

Masters are bound as much by the laws of our common Master in heaven, to give unto their servants that which is just and equal, as their servants are to do them true and faithful fervice, Col. iv. 1. Justice and equity we owe unto all men, even to the meanest of our servants; and this is not only what we have expressly covenanted with them, as their wages for their work, their food and lodging, and whatever is necessary for life, health, and strength; but also good instructions, and wholesome discipline, time enough to worship and serve God in, and directions how to do it, and chastisement when they neglect it, taking care of their fouls as well as of their bodies. They must call them to their family prayers, and teach them how to pray for themselves in private. They must not be so severe exactors of their labours, as not to allow them time for their moderate refreshment and recreation; neither must they load them with business that exceeds their strength; or make them drudge even to death, taking no care of their bodily health. Above all things you are to beware, lest you make your servants bad chrittians, by endeavouring to make them your good servants, and help them to destroy their souls, whilst they are wearing out their bodies in your service; left, I fay, the more they serve you, the more they must serve the devil also. Of all this you are guilty,

whilst you instruct them not in the fear of God, whilst you allow them not time to pray, and read, and hear the word of God; when you command them to do any wicked thing for your advantage, and employ them, without some urgent necessity, in your worldly affairs, or send them abroad needlessly, when they should be present at God's publick wor-

ship in his house.

Over and above these which I have mentioned, there are a great many more things, wherein one person hath the pre-eminence above another; whence also arise several other duties, wherein they stand obliged one to another. Some are the guardians and tutors of others; some are masters, and others scholars; some are old, and others young; some are dignified, and have marks of honour fet upon them, which others have not; some are rich, and others poor; fome are learned, wife or prudent, others fimple and ignorant; fome have attained by the grace of God to many higher degrees of christian virtue than others. Now, as the old are to instruct and give good example to the young; fo are the young to reverence, obey and imitate the old, if good and virtuous; fo are they to give them a civil honour even for the fake of their age; rifing up before the boary head, and honouring the face of the old man, Lev. xix. 32. Intreat an elder as a father, the elder women as mothers, 2 Tim. i. 2. Noblemen and gentlemen should be as exemplary, and illustrious to others in their lives, as they are exalted above them in rank and dignity; and all are to give honour, as honour is due to any one, Rom. xiii. 7. The rich are to relieve the poor, and the poor are to be thankful to the rich. I should more tire than instruct you in recounting all this fort of relative duties, which, were the scripture silent, nature would abundantly teach you.

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Q. What is the promise given to the keepers of this commandment?

A. It is in these words, That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

St. Paul calls this the first commandment with promise; and the promise he expresseth in these words, That it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth, Eph. vi. 2, 3. He takes these words, That it may go well with thee, from Deut. v. 16. Now this is the first commandment with promife, not fimply, as tho' there were no promife at all made to the keepers of the laws of piety, or of the first tables; but relating to those which follow. fo it is the first of the commandments of the second table; and to enforce it, there is this special promise annexed unto it. All the following commandments are fuch as do expresly forbid some sins, and it seems more proper for fuch to be enforced with threatnings than with promifes. But this commandment expressly injoining a duty, hath the encouragement of a special promise. This promise was indeed in the letter of it peculiar to the Israelites, and was a promise of long life, and worldly prosperity, in the land of Canaan, of which they were now going to take possession; for that was the land which the Lord their God had given them.

But this promise of health, and long life, and temporary selicity, as it relates to us christians, is to be no otherwise interpreted, than all other promises of earthly good things are. That is, they signify, that the most hopeful way of assuring to ourselves all the happiness of this world, is to keep the commandments of God; and, secondly, that it ordinarily so happeneth, that to him that keeps God's commands, God doth bestow these outward good things, and hence the obedient person hath the best reason of any one to expect that he will. But yet these promises are not absolutely to be relied on, as if it

should always be so; but with this limitation, it shall be so with us, if God see it best for us. Godliness bath, indeed, the promise of the life that now is. and of that which is to come, I Tim. iv. 8. Yet the promise peculiar to the gospel is of something infinitely better, than all that is to be had in this world. For this is the promise that he bath promised us, even eternal life, 1 John ii. 25. However, a meek, humble, and dutiful behaviour towards our superiors of all forts, and fuch as we call our betters, is the likeliest way that can be to lengthen our comforts of this life. Bleffed are the meek, (faith our Saviour) for they shall inherit the earth, Mat. v. 5. If we feek first, and principally, the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all the good things of this life shall be added unto us, Mat. vi. 33. That is, in fuch a meafure, and fo long, as God knoweth them to be fittest for us. He knoweth perfectly our temper, and our needs; and therefore often chuseth for us a more scanty and afflicted condition, than we would have chosen for ourselves; laying the cross in our way, and leading us to his kingdom of glory, thro' much tribulation and perfecution; whether this be to humble us, and to correct what is yet amiss in us, or for the exercifing of our faith, trust, hope, love, and patience. By these things it pleaseth him often to shorten the days of his most dutiful and obedient children; neither doth he so break his gracious promise made unto us, because for a less good he giveth us a much greater one, for a few pence he giveth us many pounds, and for a short and fading inheritance, one that is durable and eternal. For I reckon, (faith St. Paul) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii. 18. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, ver. 28. The light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Bleffed is the man

man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, James i. 12. God then, by shortening, our life, doth but shorten our pilgrimage, putting a speedier end than we looked for to all our troubles and forrows, and bringing us (tho' it'may be by an uneasier, yet) by a shorter way to our eternal life and blessedness with himself in heaven, so putting us into the actual possession of all we had been hoping for, and labouring to assure ourselves of.

To this commandment are commonly reduced the mutual duties betwixt husband and wife; but these being by God's institution become one of twain, are not after marriage to be considered as two, and therefore I have forborn to speak of these conjugal duties, till we come to the seventh commandment.

Q. Which is the fixth commandment?

A. Thou shalt do no murder, or not kill, Exed. xx. 13. Mat. v. 21.

Q. May none then be killed, or put to death?

A. Innocent blood must not be shed, Deut. xix. 10.

Q. May any blood at all be shed?

A. Yes; He that is worthy of death, may be put to death, Deut. xvii. 6.

Q. May you not revenge yourselves on those that

wrong you?

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A. No; We must not avenge ourselves; for vengeance is the Lord's, and he will repay, Rom. xii.

Q. By whom doth the Lord ordinarily repay ven-

geance?

A. By the magistrate, who is the revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil, Rom. xiii. 4.

Q. Is it your duty to live in peace with others?

A. Yes; As much as in us lieth, we must live peaceably with all men, Rom. xii. 18.

Q. May you not be angry with others?

A. Whofo

A. Whoso is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of judgment, Mat. v. 22, Q. May you bate no man?

A. No; He that hateth his brother is a murderer. and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him, I 70bn 111. 15.

Q. Must we do our endeavour to save mens lives?

A. Yes; Doing good to all men, as we have opportunity, Gal. vi. 10.

6. Most wonderful is the love and goodness of Almighty God to mankind. God, by reason of his infinite perfections, cannot possibly receive any addition to his own greatness or blessedness by any, or all the services, that men or angels can perform unto Therefore in all the laws which he hath given to men, he must needs aim at and intend their good, and not his own. Yea, not only their eternal, but also their temporal happiness. He hath not only commanded us, in the first table of his laws, to love, and honour, and live in a pious obedience to Him, the eternal and inexhaustible fountain of all being and bleffedness; which if we learn not to do, we lie under an utter impossibility of being eternally happy, feeing we can be eternally happy in nothing but the eternal good; neither can any one be happy in that, which he doth not love, and most highly value: But in the fecond table he hath commanded us to love, ferve, and do good and no hurt one to another, which all men know to be the readiest and furest way to make us all as happy as mortal men can be.

Before God made man upon the earth, he furnished the world with all things needful for him, and made him most ample provision both for his sustenance and comfort. He made him an easy life, by causing the earth to bring forth without his toil; a pleasant life, in planting a garden for him to live in; a plentiful and rich life, by giving him the free use of all things, but of one fingle tree; an honourable life, in

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making him, next to himself, Lord of the world. Nay, to free him from all fear of future possible evils. fuch as death, or fickness, or decay of natural life, health, or strength of body or mind, he gave him the tree of life. Now also, that man by finning is fallen from that state of happiness wherein he was created, and wherein he might for ever have continued; what a strange love and goodness was it in a provoked God, instead of a revenger to execute wrath upon him, to fend him a Saviour, by whom he might be restored to a more blessed state, than that which he had loft? 'Tis true, he still giveth us many laws, which feem very fevere, and even most unreasonable, to flesh and blood; and yet when thoroughly examined, they will all of them be found fuch as are for our good, even for our temporal good in this world; and every burden which God now lays upon us, is a fafe-guard to us from many evils, which we could not otherwife escape.

Men are many ways related to one another in this world, as in what hath been faid on the fifth commandment you have learned; and every one knows how much our obedience to that commandment, in performing all the relative duties commanded in it. doth naturally tend to the present happiness of mankind. Now in this and those which follow it, we are taught by God, what is every one's duty to every one, whether there be any special relation between them or no; that is, what we owe to all mankind, and how we ought to promote one another's happiness, as we are men, considering ourselves only in that general relation of a natural brotherhood, as we all came from the same first parents, whatever our more particular relations may be. Herein hath God provided against the general corruption of our nature, whereby we are every one so much inclined to inordinate felf-love, that we too little regard the welfare or right of our brethren, or what hurt and wrong we do to any one of them, fo that we may

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the more easily attain to our own ends, or accomplish our selfish desires. By these laws God had set sences and guards about every one's right, forbidding us, under pain of incurring his high displeasure, to do any violence or injustice to one another; and on the contrary, commanding us to contribute what we can to the happiness of all men, and to help them peaceably and securely to enjoy whatever God hath made theirs.

That which is dearest to every one is his life; and reason good there is why it should be so, seeing without it we can enjoy no good. Nor do we only desire to live; but to live comfortably, in perfect health, and strength of body. And this fixth commandment is given to fecure all these unto us. God, who made man in his own image, shewed himself very early to have a very special care of the lives of men. and not to allow the shedding of man's blood by any one who cannot shew that he hath authority from him to do it. No fooner had wicked Cain shed the blood of his righteous brother Abel, but God called him to account for it. What hast thou done? faith he. the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground; and he laid on him the curse of being a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, Gen. iv. 10, 12. And for this reason was he said to be of that wicked one, that is, of the devil, because he slew his brother, 1 John iii. 12. So our Saviour, Te are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: He was a murderer from the beginning, John viii. 44. To Noah God sufficiently signified his hatred of this great fin, faying, Surely your blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the band of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made be man, Gen. ix. 5, 6. It must needs be a very unnatural thing to flay one's brother, and brethren we all are by nature; and it is impious and facri-

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facrilegious to destroy the image of God. God therefore maketh inquisition for blood, Pfal. ix. 12. and hath his feafons of revenging it, and bringing the murderer unto judgment. This was one of the laws which God gave unto Ifrael: If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die, then the ox shall be furely foned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. But if the ox was wont to push with his born in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he bath not kept him in, but that he bath killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death, Exod, xxi. 28. And another law God gave them about the laming or maining of a person, If a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; be shall let him go free for his eye's fake. And if be smite out his man servant's tooth, or his maid servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's fake, ver. 26, 27. Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, fripe for fripe, ver. 23. If one smite another, and be die not, be shall pay for the loss of his time. and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed, Exod. xxi. 18, 19.

Now, that our bleffed Saviour alloweth neither of murder, nor of doing any hurt to our neighbour's body of any fort, I hope I need not tell you; feeing in his interpretation of this law, he allows not of fo much as being angry with our brother without a cause, or of giving him any reproachful language, or name of an ill sound to vilify him, Mat. v. 22. Nor would he suffer one to come and offer his gift at the altar, till he was reconciled to his injured brother, wer. 23, 24. I hope you spend some of your time in reading the scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament, and I beseech you observe and remember well what you read in them both touching this matter. In the Old Testament, besides what you

have already heard, I shall now defire you only to consider how often in one chapter you find these words, The murderer shall surely be put to death, Num. xxxv. 16, 17, 18, &c. Whofo killeth any person. the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses, ver. 30. Te shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death, ver. 31. Blood it defileth the land; and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood of him that is shed therein, but

by the blood of bim that feed it, ver. 33.

In reading of the New Testament, you cannot but fee, and that especially in the epistles of the holy apostles, that all forts of doing hurt, or of revenge, or of hating the persons of men, tho' they be our most bitter and spiteful enemies, is forbidden. You meet every-where with commands, exhortations and commendations of doing good both to the fouls and bodies of them who hate us; and of peace, and love, and meekness, and patience, giving and forgiving. I fay unto you, (faith he who was the most glorious example of all goodness that the world ever faw) that ye resist not evil; but who so ever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to bim the other also, Mat. v. 39. The least that can be meant by these words, is this; That we ought to be very patient and long-suffering, and bear a great many affronts and injuries, rather than return one evil for another, or do him hurt who hath done us wrong. I fay unto you, (faith he who did himfelf what he bids us do) love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, ver. 42. If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke bim; and if be repent, forgive bim, Luke xvii. 3, 4. Yea, tho' be trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, faying, I repent, thou shalt forgive bim; yea, thus are we to do even to seventy times seven, Mat. XVIII. 22.

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Answerable unto this is the doctrine of the apofiles: Be ye all of one mind, (faith St. Peter) bave compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise bleffing, I Pet. iii. 8, 9. Whilst the children of the devil curse their brethren. the children of God should make themselves known to be his by bleffing even those that curse them. Christ, when he suffered, threatened not; but committed bimself to bim that judgeth righteously, even to God, to whom vengeance belongs, I Pet. ii. 23. If thine enemy bunger, feed him; if be thirft, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt beap coals of fire upon bis head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. This is the good lesson taught us by St. Paul, Rom. xii. 20, 21. He that is by another's evil deeds provoked to passion, and thereby drawn to render evil to him again, is conquered by the evil-doer. But he that returns good for evil, conquers him that injured him; yea, and if by his goodness and patience he do not convert him, every good deed which he repayeth for the evil one which he fuffered, will be as a new coal added to the fire of hell, to increase the torments thereof. In the law of Moles we meet with enough to this purpole of doing no evil, but good to our enemies. meet thine enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to belp him, thou shall surely belp with him, Exod. xxiii. 4. 5. Even no otherwise must he be assistant to his enemy in such a case, than to his brother, Deut. xxi. 1, &c.

We must be so far from killing or hurting our christian brethren, that we must be ready, upon occasion, to hazard our own lives to save theirs. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, I John iii. 16. And as for anger, even when

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there is a just cause for it, (and for that reason alone it can be lawful) great caution is to be used, that we be not hurried on by it to do hurt: Be ye angry, (faith St. Paul) and fin not; let not the fun go down upon your wrath; neither give place to the devil, Eph. iv. 26. There may be a just cause of anger, more especially where the dishonour done to God and his holy religion, provoke us to it: Yet must we even in this case beware, lest we be transported into a furious zeal, and unadvifedly rush into that which is unlawful: Make fure that your anger continue not too long, neither grow too hot; and this it doth, when it opens the door, and makes room for the devil to tempt you to any unwarrantable courses, or the calumniator and evil man, to blaspheme and reproach the glorious name whereby you are called, or the

heavenly religion which you do profess.

To be free from murder or killing, you must industriously shun, and constantly watch against all those occasions of quarrel which you may give to others, or they to you. Give no ill names, or vilifying epithets. Avoid every thing that you suppose may be offensive to any one. Use none of the too common ways of fowing diffension, creating jealousies and fuspicions, stirring up in men fears and hatred, and begetting ill-will among neighbours, fetting them at variance one with another. Thou shalt not therefore go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people; that is, as one that makes a common practice of observing what others say or do, and carries tales and stories from one to another, of what he hears and fees; which very much diffurbs the quiet, and sometimes destroys the lives of men, Lev. xix. 16. Let there not be among us, as the prophet complains there were in Jerusalem, men that carry tales to shed blood, Ezek. xxii. 9. Thou shalt not bate thy brother in thine heart, Lev. xix. 17. Thou Shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, ver. 18. As christians we are to put off all anger, wrath,

wrath, and malice; all envy, debate, malignity, whispering, spite, boasting, implacableness, and unmercifulness, Col. iii. 8. Rom. i. 29. Leave these things to them that know not God, together with cursing and bitterness, Rom. iii. 14. Tattling, and playing the busy-body, I Tim. v. 13. And provoking one another, Gal. v. 26.

They that kill themselves are breakers of this Commandment: We are forbidden to kill any one, because man was made in the image of God; and for the same reason no one is to kill himself. God hath given no man the power of life and death over himfelf: Yet how many felf-murderers are there in the world; yea, even among them who pass for good christians? How many by intemperance, gluttony, and drunkenness, and such-liketoo common excesses, at once destroy both body and foul? How many by crimes which lay them under the stroke of the magistrate's fword? How many, by an obstinate continuance in habitual fins, notwithstanding all God's menaces, warnings, gracious invitations, and rich promifes, provoke him to shorten their days? How many, lastly, by a rude and unmannerly abusing of their neighbours in misbecoming language, and wanton jests, have raised a passion in them, which hath cost them their own lives? Take heed therefore of those, or any the like things in your behaviour towards others, which do very often hasten the death of him that useth them. Many have found his sword, whom they accounted a fool, far sharper than their own wit. Beware, above all, of doing that, whereby both your own and others, both temporal and eternal life, are in great danger of being lost; and that is, of tempting others into any finful course of life: Thus you will act the devil's part indeed, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, and gets nothing but damnation by it: For his tempting man to fin, he is rightly called a murderer from the beginning. John viii. 44. And whofo hath learned this tempting trade,

trade, which he first taught, shall share with him in his reward; the more he tempts, the hotter he heats the furnace for his own everlasting torments.

O. What is the seventh commandment? A. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

6. This commandment was given to teach us, that we should do our utmost endeavour to restrain, or keep under, and mortify all those carnal lusts, which, St. Peter faith, do war against the foul, I Pet. ii. 11. He may, indeed, be understood as speaking more univerfally of all the finful lusts of our corrupt hearts, of what fort foever. Corrupt nature being frequently, in holy scripture, called by the name of flesh; all the vicious inclinations of the same, are called the lusts of the flesh. Thus to be carnally minded, as that is opposed to our being spiritually minded, is death, Rom. viii. 6. Yet among all the finful inclinations and defires of our depraved nature, there be none that war more against the soul, than such as are, in the most proper sense of the word, called fleshing lusts; as adultery, fornication, and all manner of uncleanness; these therefore are to be disarmed by us, that they destroy not our fouls: Of these only adultery is here named; but it is not because this is the only fin that is here forbidden, but as a great fin. under its name all other fins of this fort are forbidden Adultery is the defiling of the marriage bed, and is not committed but by persons, one whereof at least is married: But, besides this, we are to look on all other forts of lasciviousness, and bodily filthiness, together with all those indulgencies to the flesh, which naturally provoke and excite men to unclean defires and actions, to be here forbidden; and all purity and chastity, both of mind and body, to be herein commanded.

Of these sins here forbidden there be many forts; and they are such as are reckoned among the fins of

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the Gentiles, given over by God to a reprobate mind: For of them thus speaketh St. Paul; God gave them up to uncleanness, thro' the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves, even by the most unnatural acts of filthiness, Rom. i. 24, &c. We have also another account of these sins of the slesh given us by the same apostle, reducing them to these four heads, of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness; of which last three sorts, unmarried persons may be guilty, Gal. v. 19.

Q. Is fornication a fin?

A. Yes; for we are commanded to flee fornication; and told, that this is the will of God, that we should abstain from it, I Cor. vi. 18. I The st. 3.

Q. What doth God allow of to prevent fornication?

A. To avoid fornication he allows, that every man have his own wife, and every woman her own hufband, I Cor. vii. 2.

Q. Was marriage instituted by God?

A. Yes; in the beginning God made both male and female; and faid, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one slesh, Mat. xix. 4, 5.

Q. Is it the duty of all persons to marry?

A. No; it is in some cases good for a man not to touch a woman, I Cor. vii. 1.

Q. Is it lawful for all forts of men to marry?

A. Yes; they that cannot contain, let them marry; for marriage is honourable in all men, 1 Cor. vii. 9. Heb. xiii. 4.

Q. May a man put away his wife, or a woman leave her husband, when it pleaseth them to do so?

A. No; What God hath joined together, let no man put afunder, Mat. xix. 6.

Q. What's the husband's duty to his wife?

A. Husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies, to nourish and cherish them, even as the Lord the church, Epb. v. 29.

Q. What's the wife's duty to her husband?

A. Let the wife fee, that she reverence her hus. band, and submit herself unto him in every thing, as unto the Lord, Eph. v. 22, 33. Col. iii. 18.

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Q. May one have more than one wife or bushand at

once?

A. No; for they twain shall be one flesh, Mat. xix. 5.

Q. Is all wantonness and lasciviousness in thought,

word, or deed, forbidden?

A. Yes; for he that looks on a woman to lust after her, commits adultery with her in his heart, Mat. v. 28.

Q. What course should we take for the preventing of

these sins?

A. We must make no provision for the slesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. xiii. 14.

Q. Are we not then to be very temperate in eating

and drinking?

A. Yes; that so we may mortify our members which are upon the earth; and keep under the body, bringing it into subjection, Col. iii. 5. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

6. Fornication differeth from adultery in this, that it is the fin of uncleanness committed by persons that are fingle and unmarried; whereas the fame thing committed by those, whereof one or both are married, is adultery: God's defign in this law, is to preserve the purity and chastity both of mind and body among men; and this command he giveth us in love; for these two do mightily conduce to the health and vigour of both parts of man, and are highly pleafing to Almighty God, as the things which qualify us both for his worship and service on earth, and the enjoyment of him in heaven. Hence also continence, and a fingle life, altho' not necessary as a duty, is evidently enough commended to our choice, both by our Saviour, and St. Paul, Mat. xix. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 38. and preferred before the marriage state. Our Saviour indeed

indeed tells us, that all are not able to contain, or to lead a fingle life; but they only to whom it is given: However, hereby it is plain, that it ought to be esteemed, and sought for as a special gift of God, Mat. xix. 11. Some (faith he there) are born eunuchs; that is, they are, by their natural temper and conflitution, little or nothing inclined that way; but can without any great difficulty contain, being able to live chaftly and undefiled; and to that end, stand in no need of the marriage bed. Some, again, are made eunuchs by men, by a barbarous and inhuman custom, which was then much in use in the heathen world, and continues to this day among other unbelievers, disabled wholly from the proper use of the marriage bed. And, laftly, fome by the strength of christian resolution, thro' the grace of God obtained by prayer, watching, abstinence, and the confrant use of mortifying means, have got the mastery of all carnal lusts and inclinations, and have so subdued the flesh, that they need no more the common remedy of marriage. Now (faith our Saviour) be that is able to receive it, let him receive it; that is, if any person can thus attain to this gift of God, let him use it with much thankfulness, tho' not as a thing absolutely necessary to his falvation; yet, as an excellent help to serve God with a greater freedom of fpirit, a fair opportunity of doing more good in the world, and a freeing of our minds from manifold troubles, disturbances, and distractions, which usually attend a married life.

After the same manner writeth St. Paul, It is good for a man not to touch a woman; and I say unto the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I, I Cor. vii. 1, 9. But if they cannot contain, let them marry, ver. 10. If thou marry, thou hast not sinned; nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, ver. 28. And this I speak for your own prosit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the

the Lord without distraction, ver. 35. However, whether you marry, or marry not, you must remember, that you have rules given you of God, teaching you how you ought to behave yourselves in either state, and these you are bound diligently to observe.

Let then the husband remember, that by God's ordinance, he is the head of the wife, Eph. v. 23. It is therefore his duty, not only to love, but also to guide, govern, and provide for her. But then it is also requisite, that he have wisdom enough to do it with discretion, and goodness, and tenderness of nature; to do it in meekness and gentleness: He must not be bitter against his wife, Col. iii. 19. And he must be able to instruct her in the true religion. feeing wives are commanded, if they would be fatisfied of any thing wherein they are doubtful, to ask their husbands at home, I Cor. xiv. 35. Hufbands are to love their wives, even as themselves, Epb. v. 33. and to grudge them nothing that is needful for them; but to be as tender of them, as of their own flesh, to protect them, and comfort them, and provide for them, as for themselves; to dwell with them, and to give honour to them, as to the weaker veffels, I Pet. iii. 7. and to be as faithful to them in performing the marriage covenant, as they expect their wives should be to them.

And next, let the wife look to it, that she do her part, and be, as God made the woman at first to be, an help meet for her husband, Gen. ii. 20. and not, as Eve proved unto Adam, an instrument of the devil, to tempt him to do evil. The wife oweth unto her husband subjection and reverence, and such a sweetness of behaviour and conversation, that if any husband obey not the word of God, he also may, without the word, he won by the conversation of the wife; whilst he beholds her chaste conversation coupled with tear: Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man

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of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the fight of God is of great price, I Pet. iii. 1, &c. She ought to be sober, to love her husband and her children; to be discreet, chaste, a keeper at home, good and obedient, Tit. ii. 4, 5. to guide the house, I Tim. v. 14. adorned in modest apparel, with ihame-

facedness and sobriety, I Tim. ii. 9.

Let all persons, whether married or unmarried, remember this, That the hed must be kept undefiled, Heb. xiii. 4. That our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghoft, I Cor. vi. 19. That if any man defile the temple of God, bim will God destroy, I Cor. iii. 17. That our bodies are the members of Christ, and we ought not to take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot; no, God forbid, I Cor. vi. 15. That every one of us should possess bis own vessel in fanctification and bonour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God; for God bath not called us to uncleanness, but unto boliness, 1 Thess. iv. 4. We ought not therefore to walk, as the Gentiles, in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, which inflames to lust; nor in revelings, and banquetings, and abominable idolatries, 1 Pet: iv. 3. not in rioting and drunkenness, neither in chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 14. Our great business and christian duty is, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24. As for fornication and all uncleanness, it should not be once named among us, as becometh faints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting: For no whoremonger, nor unclean person, bath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God, Eph. v. 3, &c. Be not therefore deceived, dear brethren, by the foolish and wicked talk of evil men. Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God, I Cor. VI. 9, 10.

Take heed therefore, as you love God and your own fouls, of all these fins, such, I mean, as immoderate eating and drinking; for he that gives himself to these, both disposeth himself unto these fins of uncleanness, and exposeth him to all temptations to the same: And that you may the better abstain from fuch fins, take heed (I befeech you) of frequenting any wanton and lascivious company, delighting in loose and filthy discourses, foolish talking, and obscene wit: For evil communications corrupt good manners, I Cor. xv. 33. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, for the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the bearers, Eph. iv. 2.1. If any man that is called a brother, or that professeth himself to be a christian, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extertioner, with such an one, we should not eat, I Cor. v. 11. Beware also of idleness, and want of some good and useful calling and business, wherein you may keep yourselves employed; for whilst you have no better things to busy yourfelves, and your thoughts about, your lufts will fet them on work. Burn all filthy and obscene books, poems, fongs, and romances, those principally I mean which entertain you with feigned stories of lovers, and their exploits; for these fill your heads fo full of wanton imaginations, and fo possess your fancies, that they taint your very blood, and fleeping or waking, you are always haunted with fome unclean devil.

Beware, how you give too much liberty to your eyes, or ears, or any other of your fenses, and suffer them to dwell too much on any fair, and charming objects of lust. Remember how David was insnared by looking on beautiful Bathsheba; and Samson, by that of Dalilah; and Herod, by the dancing of Herodias's daughter; and learn of Joh, to make a covenant with your eyes, not to look upon a maid, Joh xxxi. I. He that looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath

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The whole Religion of a Christian. 309 bath committed adultery with her in his heart, faith our Saviour, Mat. v. 28. If therefore thy right eye, or right hand offend thee, cast them from thee, Mat. v. 29. This course you must take, to present your bodies a living facrifice, boly and acceptable unto God, thro' Jesus Christ, Rom. xii. I. and glorify God in your bodies, as the temples of the Holy Ghost, I Cor. vi. 19, 29. Many reasons against this sin, many aggravations of it, many examples of those who have fuffered for it, I now wave, as easy to be observed by yourselves in your reading of the sacred books; and that I may keep within the bounds of a catechism, which pretends to no more, but to bring you to a right understanding of the first principles of your holy religion, or the foundation whereon the christian faith and life do itand.

## Q. What's the eighth commandment? A. Thou shalt not steal.

6. The end of this commandment is, to secure unto every one his own just possessions and goods, that every one may quietly and fafely enjoy whatfoever portion of the things of this world is become his own: This law then supposeth, and takes for granted, that a man may have a right and property in fomething; or that he may have fomething, which is so his own, that it is not any other man's, neither can any other deprive him of it, or of any part of it, without injustice, and doing him wrong. All things do not now lie in common, so that every one may take and leave what he pleafeth, whereicever, or in whose hands soever he finds it. Had man continued in innocence, we know not what might have been; there would have been enough for all men, and every one would have been satisfied with what was enough for him: But man's nature is now to depraved, and our lusts and appetites are become so insatiable, that it is now altogether neces-

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fary to the peace of the world, that men should have some certain portions set out for them, and that their estates should have some certain limits or bounds, whereby they may be known, and distinguished from other mens; that so every one knowing his own, may freely and securely make use of it, and rest contented with it, without invading any other man's right; that he may be free from all disturbance from his neighbours, and may create no disturbance to any of them.

Now a thing may become a man's own fundry ways, and by these especially: First, it may become his own, by his being the first occupant, who first enter'd upon, and took possession of it. When men multiplied, and spread themselves abroad over the face of the earth, whatever part of it any one first enter'd upon and possessed, was thereby made his own; and there being room enough in the wide world for all, it became thenceforward injustice in any other, violently to cut him of his possession, unless he did it by some special command of God, who, as the supreme and absolute Lord of all, may give to any one what part of the earth he will, and disposses whom he will: Thus the Canaanites lost their right to their land; God taking it from them for their fins, and bestowing it on the seed of Abra-In the next place, one may have a right of inheritance by fuccession from the legal possessor; concerning which, as a thing approved of God, you find laws given by him, Numb. xxvii. 7, &c. Thirdly, one may have a right by free donation or gift of the rightful owner; or he may have it as a reward and wages for the labour he hath taken, and the good service he hath done to deserve it, 7am. v. 4. Thus Facob was enriched by Laban: Or, lastly, by contract, bargain, covenant, or deed of fale, and other fuch-like acts, whatever they be, supposing them not unjust in themselves, nor contrary to the laws under which we live. Whatfoever is thus made any one's OWE,

own, God's command is, that we fuffer him peaceably to enjoy it, and that we go not about to deprive him by any means of any part of it, either by fraud or violence.

Q. Must you then deal righteously in all things with your neighbour?

A. Yes; All that do unrighteously, are an abomination to the Lord, Deut. xxv. 16.

Q. May you do wrong to no man?

A. No; He that doth wrong, shall receive for the wrong he hath done, and there is no respect of perfons, Col. iii. 25.

Q. Are you to pay justly what soever you owe?

A. Yes; We must render unto all their dues, and owe no man any thing, but to love one another, Rom. xiii. 4.

Q. Is it a fin to oppress the poor?

A. Yes; He that oppresseth the poor and needy, shall die, his blood shall be upon him, Ezek. xviii. 12, 13.

Q. Must you pay the labourer his wages?

A. Yes; If the hire of the labourer be kept back by fraud, the cry thereof entereth into the ears of the Lord, fam. v. 4.

Q. May you over-reach another in trading, or any

fort of dealing?

A. No; Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, 1 Thess. iv. 6.

Q. May you feek to gain by any dishonest way?

A. No; We must not take usury, nor increase, nor greedily gain of our neighbour by extortion, or any dishonest gain, Ezek xxii. 12, 13.

Q. Is not all unrighteousness in judgment sinful?

A. Yes; We must do no unrighteousness in judgment; we must not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty, Lev. xix. 15.

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Q. Is it your duty to fave your neighbour's goods,

and prevent his loss as much as you can?

A. Yes; If we meet with our enemy's ox, or his ass going astray, we must surely bring him back to him again, Exod. xxiii. 4.

Q. Are we to labour for an bonest livelihood, and

not thro' idleness be chargeable to others?

A. Yes; We must with quietness work with our own hands, that we may have lack of nothing, but eat our own bread, 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12. 2 Thess. iii. 12.

Q. Is it our duty to relieve the needy?

A. Yes; Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour; working with his own hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth, Epb. iv. 28.

Q. Are you to relieve lufty and idle beggars?

A. No; If any will not work, neither let him eat, 2 Theff. iii. 10.

§. I hope you verily believe all this, that you have now told me, to be the will of God, and your duty, and that you are resolved to do it, even to your lives end. And if you believe this, you cannot chuse but see more and more in what you have here faid, what I think it very necessary again and again to beg of you to observe and consider, how good and gracious a Master you serve, as long as you serve God. You serve a Lord and Master, who is not only ready to pardon all your infirmities, and to accept of your unfeigned repentance of the most heinous fins and offences, and of your very imperfect duties and fervices; but also takes a special care of every thing that conduceth to your temporal welfare and comfort, not only of your spiritual concerns, but of your bodily also; neither of your body, and life, and health, but even of your worldly estate and goods; not only that every one may quietly enjoy his own, but that they who are in want, and unable

to live of themselves, may be relieved out of the

abundance of others.

If all this will not perfuade us to be good and religious, to love God, and to serve him in love, the devil hath still a wonderful power over us. If we do not now live comfortably, quietly, contentedly, and thankfully, of what God hath provided for us, and if we will violently break thro' those fences of laws which God hath fet to mens estates, and disturb our neighbours in their own just possessions; if any suffer wrong by his neighbour, or languish in the want of what is necessary for him; nothing can be blamed for it but the wickedness of men, who are resolved not to obey the gracious laws of a most loving God: fuch laws, I mean, as this which I am now explaining to you, to give you a tafte of this goodness of God. And this which is given us in a very few words, we shall, for our better understanding of it, find more fully expressed in other parts of holy scripture. repeat to you a few of them.

Te shall not steal, neither deal falsly, neither lye one to another. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour. neither rob bim; the wages of bim that is bired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning, Lev. xix. 11, 13. Te shall not oppress one another, but thou shalt fear thy God, Lev. xxv. 17. Let none of you suffer as a thief, or as an evil-doer, I Pet. iv. 15. The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9. It was God's law to the Fews of old, that he that stole an ox, or a sheep, killing or felling it, must restore five oxen for one, and four sheep for one. And if they were found alive in his hand, he was to restore two for one, Exod. xxii. I. 4. If one was killed breaking an house in the night. no blood was to be shed for him; if in the day time, he must make full restitution, or be fold for his thest. ver. 2, 3.

In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour, Lev. xix. 15. Rob not the poor, because he is poor neither; meither oppress the afflicted in the gate; for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of him that spoiled them, Prov. xxii. 22. Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the satherless, plead for the widow, Isa. i. 17.

If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own field, and of the best of bis own vineyard, shall be make restitution. If fire break out and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field be consumed therewith; he that kindled the sire, shall surely make restitution. If a man deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep; and it be stolen out of a man's house, if the thief be found, let him pay double; if the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he hath put his hand to his neighbour's goods, Exod. xxii. 5, &c.

Woe unto him that buildeth his bouse in unrighteousness, and his chambers in wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work, Jer. xxii. 13. Thou shalt not have in thy hag diverse weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great, and a small. But thou shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, Deut. xxv.

13, 8c.

With-bold not good from them to whom it is due; when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by theo. Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee, Prov. iii. 27. Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble, Psal. xli. 1. The upright is gracious, sull of compassion, and righteous; a good man sheweth favour and lendeth, Psal. cxii. 4, 5. He bath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousures dureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with henour,

ver. 9. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth, Psal. xxxvii. 21. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away, Mat. v. 42. Abundance of idleness, fulness of bread, and want of mercy to the poor, were some of those sins which brought down fire from heaven upon wicked Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 49. He that will eat must work, as you said but now, 2 Thess. iii. 10.

I shall to this add but one more text of scripture, and it is this; If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lye unto his neighbour, in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in any thing taken by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour, or hath found that which was lost, and lyeth concerning it, &c. then it shall be that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or hath deceitfully gotten, or was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found; and shall add a sifth part more thereto, and give it to him unto whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass-offering, Lev. vi. 2, &c.

By all these words of holy scripture, tho' but a very few of those which I might have produced to the same purpose, you may easily understand this commandment. And hereby you may fee also very plainly, as, on the one hand, the great care which God hath always taken to fecure unto every one his temporal right and interest, so on the other hand, how basely and unthankfully most of us behave ourfelves towards fo good a God, and how little delight we take in walking obediently in his holy laws, altho' we cannot deny them to be made for our great benefit; even as tho' we had no manner of fense of our own greatest concerns, or such an enmity to God and goodness, that rather than obey God, and be tied to do good, we are content to ruin ourselves, and be for ever miserable.

If we will now (as it concerns us to do) examine ourselves by this commandment, I fear there would

a great many more thieves be found among us, than are thought so by others, or indeed will own themfelves to be so: I will but point out unto your observation some few sorts of them. By what has been said it is very evident, that to steal (as it is here forbidden) is any way to do wrong to our neighbour in his worldly estate or goods: whether this be done by force and violence, or by fraud, guile, and deceit, he that doth it is to be accounted a thief and a robber: most sorts of sins here forbidden you may

eafily of yourselves hereby discover.

Now confider, if it be not as clear as the light at noon day, tho' but a few take notice of it, That every vain prodigal, and wasteful spend-thrift, such as are almost every-where to be met with, be not one of these thieves. Doth he not in wasting his money and goods by excessive eating and drinking, gaming, and cloathing, furniture, and other vicious courfes, and unnecessary things, rob a great many at once, even his whole family, his wife, his children, and all that depend on his provision for them; and more than fo, the poor and needy, whom God hath bound him out of the fruit of his own labour to relieve: it is plain he robs all these in wasting what God hath made their right and due, and is one of the very worst fort of thieves, and therefore deserves a feverer punishment by far, than he that steals an horse or a mare.

Is it not also, hence plain enough, That every one who contributes not freely, and proportionably to his ability, whatever is needful for the support of the government, the safeguard, peace, and tranquillity of the nation, the maintaining of the good estate both of church and kingdom, all which God hath made it his duty to provide for to the best of his power, is a thief and robber? What then are they to be esteemed, who either in contriving of laws to this purpose, or in the execution of them, shift or shuffle off as much as they can, the burden from themselves

felves, tho' best able to bear it, and lay it on other mens shoulders, not caring tho' they sink under it? Certainly these are very guilty of thest, and deserve the usage due to him who at once cheats the whole

nation of its due from him.

It hath been shewed, that every one, who by any crafty trick or device over-reacheth, or out-witteth another in bargaining, or buying, or felling, is guilty of stealth. Is not he so then, that wittingly puts off bad wares for good, an unfound horse or other beaft for a found one, concealing the faults which the buyer is most concerned to know, and which if he knew, he would not buy it at all, or not at so great a price, as being a thing either wholly, or in a great measure, useless and unserviceable to him? Is not he, I fay, guilty of breaking this commandment, who takes the advantage of his neighbour's ignorance, or of his present necessity, to sell to dear to him? Is not he so too, that dispraises, and undervalues what he has a mind to buy, and endeavours by some crafty stratagem or other to beat down the price of the market for his own present profit, tho' to the loss of many? And what is he, who will not allow a competent gain to the feller? Or he that fells by scant weights and meafures, and will not afford a good pennyworth to the buyer? Is this any better or honester dealing, than to pick or cut purses? A full pennyworth is due to every one for his penny; and a penny is as much due to every one for a pennyworth. And fair and equal dealing and truth is due to all men, and it is theft not to afford it them.

Whosoever payeth not seasonably and fully a sufficient reward to him that laboureth for him, is no better than a thief, depriving the labourer of his due. And no better is he that receiveth wages, and doth not well and faithfully do his work to the best of his skill and ability; or that hireth himself forth

to do, what he knows himself unable to do; for to do the work he was hired for is the thing which is due from him unto the hirer.

Every idle person, that doth not what is in his power to maintain himself and family without being burdensome to others, is also a thief. Spending his time unprofitably in fport and pleasure, and having no honest and good calling, whereby he may some way or other be serviceable to his country, he cannot be otherwise esteemed. And every rich churl, how high soever he may stand in the world, is no better to be thought of, how uncivil foever it is to call him fo; feeing he doth not that good with his estate, which is due from him to the needy; neither lives to any better purpose, than to eat the poor man's bread, and to confume unprofitably what was given him for the use of the needy. Such an one is every landlord that oppresseth his tenants, so that under him they cannot get a comfortable livelihood, nor a maintenance proportionable to the pains and charge which they are at in husbanding his lands for him. And fuch an one too is every tenant, who thro' idleness, or ill husbandry, or on any vain pretence, payeth not his rent duly according to covenant, that's due from him to his landlord.

Every borrower that purposeth and endeavoureth not sincerely to pay at his day, and to the full, is a thief, and abuseth the kindness of his friend who lent unto him; and the same is every bondsman and surety, if he pay not the debt for which he is bound, in case the borrower fail; for on his credit the thing was lent, and the lender wants his due thro' the confidence he had in his fidelity.

Every wilful trespasser is a robber of his neighbour; and so is every one that seeks by law any more than the recovering of his own, and what will pay him his charges, which his injurious neighbour what God never made his own, that is, he revengeth himself. Thus also every attorney and lawyer, that takes a see for the managing and pleading any cause which he knows to be unjust, and encourageth his client therein; doing his endeavour for a little money to make a bad cause seem good, and a good cause bad, and so to take away one man's right, and sell it to another. He that being consulted in such a cause as he knows to be bad, and tells not his client plainly of the badness of it, if he lose the cause, cheats his client; and if he carries it, he wrongs him, against whom he pleads, of his own. He is a robber either way, making a man pay either for nothing, or for being undone, and all this to get to himself a base and infamous livelihood.

I shall not need to add any more to what is said on this commandment; for by these sew instances, it will be easy enough for you to discover your own thest wheresoever you are guilty of it. And now let me only mind you of this one thing, That it is in vain for you to hope for a pardon of your injustice, or to think that God will accept of any service done him, till you have made restitution, or have given satisfaction to your neighbour for every wrong that you have wilfully done him, to the utmost of your power. For whilst you do not so, you persevere in

Q. What is the ninth commandment?

your fin without repentance.

A. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Q. What's the danger of bearing false witness?

A. A false witness shall not be unpunished, Prov. xix. 5.

Q. Is it a sin to slander any one?

A. Yes; We must speak evil of no man, Tit.

Q. May you use no guile or deceit in your words?

A. No; We must refrain our tongue from evil, and our lips, that they speak no guile, I Pet. iii. 10.

Q. May you rashly censure any one?

A. No; We must beware of evil surmising, and must not judge, that we be not judged, I Tim. vi. 4. Mat. vii. 1.

Q. May you not lye?

A. No; We must not lye one to another, but speak every man truth with his neighbour, Col. iii. 9. Eph. iv. 25.

1. God, who is always mindful of us, and defirous of our temporal as well as our eternal welfare, having given laws for the fecuring us our natural life, and bodily health, our chastity, and our possessions, in this law makes the like provision for the fecurity of our good name, and honest reputation; a thing which ought to be very dear to every one. We ought to labour all we can to obtain a good name, at least to deserve one by our innocent and virtuous deeds; and we should use a great deal of care to preferve it, because of the great advantages which we thereby gain of doing much good in the world, A good name (faith Solomon) is better than precious ointment, Eccl. vii. 1. A good report maketh the bones fat, Prov. xv. 30. And again, A good name is rather to be chosen, than great riches, Prov. XXII. I.

It is therefore God's great goodness to us in this precept to forbid us to lessen the credit, or blacken the reputation one of another; and on the other hand to command us to uphold and vindicate one another's good name and credit as much as we can with honesty and truth: especially when by a lawful authority, and for the doing of justice, we are called to witness the truth of any matter in controversy, we must take heed of bearing false witness; for by that means we may wrong our neighbour, not only of his good name, but of his estate also; yea,

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yea, his limbs, and very life itself. A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour, is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow, Prov. xxv. 18. A falle witness that speaketh lyes, is one of the things which God hateth, Prov. vi. 19. Yea, fuch an one is an abomination to the Lord. a false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lyes, shall perish, Prov. xix. 9. If his falfhood be not discovered by men, and if the judge cannot condemn him for want of evidence, or a legal conviction, God's judgment will certainly find him out, and, without a timely repentance, bring him to condign punishment. If (faid God by Moses) the witness be a false witness, and bath testified falsly against his brother, then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother; so shalt thou put evil away from you. And those which remain shall bear, and fear, and shall benceforth commit no more such evil thing among you. And thine eye shall not pity, but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Deut. xviii. 19, &c. God would have the punishment of a false witness to be very severe and exemplary.

To defame, or to raile up an ill report of another, is also a very great sin: Thou shall not therefore raise, or (as some read it) receive a false report; put not thy hand with the wicked, to be an unrighteous witness, Exod. xxiii. 1. To flinder, calumniate, or backbite our neighbour, are great fins. The answer which the pfalmist gives to his own question, Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy bill? is, part of it, in these words, He that speaketh the truth in his heart, he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour, Pfal. xxv. 2, 3. Revilers are reckoned among them that shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10. A railer's company christians are commanded to avoid, 1 Cor. v. 11. He that uttereth a slander, is a fool, or wicked person, Prov.

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x. 18. Whisperers and backbiters are numbered among those persons, who are given over by God for their wickedness to their own lusts, Rom. i. 29, 30. Of tatlers, busy-todies, tale-bearers, &c. whose most ordinary discourse is of the fins and follies of their neighbour, and of unruly and vain talkers, besides these places of scriptures, I Tim. i. 13. Tit. i. 10. Prov. xviii. 8. xxvi. 20. you find enough to shew their sinfulness elsewhere.

They that deal truly, are God's delight, Prov. xii. 22. A righteous man therefore hateth lying, Prov. xiii. 5. A faithful witness will not lye, but a false witness will utter lyes, Prov. xiv. 5. When the devil speaketh a lye, he speaketh of his own; for he is a lyar, and the father of it, John viii. 44. The lip of truth sha'l be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment, Prov. xii. 19. Into the heavenly Ferusalem shall not enter he that maketh a lye, Rev. xxi. 27. but shall be shut out among dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, chap. xxii. 15.

In short, this commandment is given to be a bridle to that unruly little member, the tongue, too often set on fire of hell, and firing all about it, fames iii. 6. to keep us within the bounds of truth, civility, sobriety and charity in our whole conversation; that our speech may be such as may administer grace to the bearers, Eph. iv. 29. That we speak not evil one of another, James iv. 11. But that evil-speaking be

put away from us, Eph. iv. 31.

Especially let me warn you, for the better keeping of this commandment, to take heed of these things. First, That you speak no evil of God, nor of his word, or holy religion therein taught you. This is a fin that's now too much in fashion, wherein the papists, the quakers, and many other profane people, how much soever they differ in other matters, are all too well agreed, and seem mightily delighted. Secondly, Speak not evil of dignities, 2 Pet.

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2 Pet. ii. 10. endeavouring thereby to possess the people with an ill opinion of their rulers, and of the government, thereby preparing and disposing them to rebellion; forging lyes of them, and of their faults and errors in government, and industriously spreading abroad false stories, to beget a more universal Thirdly, Speak no lyes in hypocrify, hatred of them. I Tim. iv. 2. Some have learned to speak with the tongues of angels, even whilft they are doing the work of devils; and to undermine religion by feeming very religious; and by good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple, Rom. Above all, take heed of speaking lyes in Thus did the false prophets of old, and were by God rebuked and threatened for prophefying falfly in his name, and faying, The Lord faith it, when he had faid no fuch thing, but they deluded the people with the visions and dreams of their own heads. Such are all they also, who now amongst us vilify the light of God's word, which was given us by the Holy Spirit of God; and pretend to a Christ, and Spirit, and Light within them, whereby they are wholly guided, and, if you believe them, infallibly; so that attending to that light, they cannot err, but in every thing teach the word You may add to these all them who preof God. tend things to be forbidden by God which he never forbad, or to be commanded by him, which he never commanded; and to confirm what they fay to be of God, forge miracles and prodigies done in favour of their party and profession. Now such as these are the worst fort of lyars, and false witnesses, belying God himself, and decieving ignorant souls with their lyes, into the most abominable and pernicious errors.

Q. What's the tenth commandment?

A. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

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Q. Ought

Q. Ought-you to govern the thoughts and desires of

your hearts by God's laws?

A. Yes; For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, falle witness, and blasphemies, defiling a man, Mat. xv. 19, 20.

Q. May you not defire any thing that is ano-

ther's?

A. Not to his hurt or loss. We must take heed and beware of covetousness, mortify all inordinate affections and evil concupilcence, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind, Luke xii. 15. Col. iii. 5. Eph iv. 23.

Q. Must we be well contented with that which is

our own?

A. Yes; Our conversation must be without covetousness, and we must be content with such things as we have, Heb. xiii. 5.

Q. Ought we to defire the prosperity of all men?

A. Yes; We must not only seek our own, but

every one another's wealth, I Cor. x. 24.

In all the duties which you do, you ought to have a special regard to this one thing, that all be done with an intention of mind to glorify God Tho' the things which you do, be in themselves very good, and tho' God have commanded them to be done; tho' they be fuch things as others reap much good from, and do tend naturally to the happiness of the world; yet God in them all so much regards the heart, and the affection wherewith you do them, that nothing which you do will be acceptable to him, or do yourselves any good in the end, unless it be done with a right frame and temper of mind and spirit. If you do the best of duties, and not in love to God, or not taking a great delight, in it because you know 'tis pleasing to him; and if you abstain from any fin, and yet either think the worse of God because he hath forbidden

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it; or retain in your heart a longing after it, and a defire to commit it, tho' you know it displeaseth him; what you do, or do not, it's all one in God's account, and he accepts neither of your persons, nor your performances: The very first motions of sin in your heart, will indeed do you no hurt, tho' they be evil in themselves, so long as you strive against them, and resist them, and by no means cherish them, nor suffer them to gain upon your affections or practice; but if you give way to them, and take pleasure in them, they involve you in a great guilt, and lay you open to the wrath of God.

In this commandment, God layeth the ax to the root of the tree, the evil inclinations of our corrupt hearts, the spring-head of all fin; and more especially of the fins against the laws of the second table. It is enough to fatisfy the laws of men, if we do the outward acts commanded, and abstain from acts forbidden, with what mind, or upon what principles foever we do so: For men can see no firther into us, than our words and actions lay us open to their eyes: But God feeth the heart, and principally regardeth it, and we must never hope to satisfy him with an outfide of religion. Wash therefore your hands, ye finners, from all evil actions; yet befure withal, that you purify your hearts from all finful lusts and affections, 7am. iv. 8. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life, Prov iv. 23. As the outward circumcifion of the flesh was a duty, and to be done because God had commanded it; and as the offering of the facrifices appointed by God, was a duty not to be omitted; yet were these of no worth in God's account, without the inward circumcifion of the heart, Rom. ii. 29. Deut. x. 16. nor without the facrifice of a broken heart, and contrite spirit, Pfal. li. 17. fo is it also the new heart that gives life to all christian duties.

Hence our bleffed Jesus, rescuing this law by a spritual interpretation of it, from the salse glosses Y 2 where-

wherewith the Tewish doctors had corrupted it, makes it reach to the inward man, and the affections of the heart, the thing which they least thought on. He made it to be one degree of murder, to be causelessly angry, Mat. v. 22. and calls the looking on a woman, to lust after her, a committing of adultery with her in the heart, ver. 28. He rebukes the Scribes and Pharifees for their superstitious cleansing of the outside of the cup and platter, whilst they neglected the infide; bidding them make clean the infide, and then the outfide would be clean alfo. Mat. xxiii, 25, 26. And for this, that they observed the letter of the law as to the outward act, thinking this to be enough, he compares them to whited fepulchers, beautiful outwardly, but within, full of dead mens bones, and all uncleanness, ver. xxvii. 28.

Not only the evil act that we have done at any time thro' the corruption of our evil heart, and the evil inclination to it unrefifted, is a breach of this law, but also the pleasure, which at any time afterward we find in the remembrance of it: The cherishing of the thoughts of it with delight, and the letting them rest upon our minds, without any displeasure at ourselves for committing such sins: Thus we suffer the old man, and the body of fin, still to live in us; yea, to feed, and grow too strong for us: Whereas they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24. We thus fuffer fin to take and keep deeper rooting in us, and we cherish the seed of it, till it over-run all, and will fuffer no good thing to grow by it, nor allow us to die unto the world, and to live unto God. Every one is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed: Then, when lust bath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death, Jam. i. 14, 15.

We are expressly here forbidden to harbour in in our breasts any the least defire or longing after our neighbour's wife; and commanded very carefully to

thun whatever we think likely to kindle any fuch unlawful desire in us. David's coveting after Bathsheba, was occasioned by his looking on her beauty. We are forbidden to covet our neighbour's house, or any of his possessions; as Abab did the vineyard of Naboth. We are commanded every one to be content with his present state, as St. Paul had learned to We must not envy one for his being in a more full, plentiful, or honourable condition than we are; but pray that every one may have more yet, if it may do him good; and to wish that he may long enjoy, with much fatisfaction of mind, whatfoever it pleaseth God to give him; and that he may have grace to improve all to his greatest advantage, and may reap the whole benefit of it; bearing a very hearty good-will, and a brotherly affection towards

him, and rejoicing in his prosperity.

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Inordinate felf-love is indeed the main thing that is here forbidden; and this is the root and fpring of most fins, whether against God or our neighbour immediately. In the last days (saith St. Paul) perilous or difficult times shall come; such times, as an honest conscientious man, and especially the man of God, a good bishop, such as Timothy, shall not well know how to behave himself in: Now what is it that will make these times so perilous? Why, men shall be lovers of their own selves; and then it follows, They shall be covetous, boasters, proud blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unboly, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c. You fee here, what a train of fins follow this leader called self-love: Let this selfishness once get ground within us, and we are perfectly enflaved to it, and to every vice that attends it; and no law of God shall be Y 4

kept by us, any farther than it can be made com-

pliant with our own carnal interest.

Now, as God made us not for ourselves alone, so he will not allow us to love ourselves alone; every one must have a share in our love. Love indeed is, in effect, the keeping of all the commandments; and this felf-love is the breaking of them all. Our bleffed Lord (as you have heard) makes but two commandments, and love is the substance of them both, and both of them are against self-love. Thou halt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets, Mat. xxii. 37, &c. The former of these you find in the law, Deut. vi. 5. and this is the sum of the four commandments of the first table, containing our duty towards God: The latter you meet with in Lev. xix. 18. and it is the fum of the fix commandments of the fecond table, containing our duty towards our neighbour. So that this is the the thing that is commanded in this tenth commandment, to love our neighbour as ourselves, and so this is the fum of all the commendments relating to our neigh-This is plain from the answer of our Saviour to the young man, who asked him what he should do, that he might have eternal life: Jesus bad him keep the commandments, and rehearfing to him those of the second table, he doth it in these words, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother. Then, for the tenth, forbidding to cover, he thus expresseth it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyseif, Mat. xix. 18. So St. Paul, If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this faying, Thou halt love thy neighbour as thyself, Rom. xiii. 9. Therefore he adds, ver. 10 Love is the fulfilling of the law, as before he had faid, ver. 8. He that loveth another bath fulfilled the law. This love will keep one from luftfully, covetoully,

vetoufly, maliciously, or ambitiously desiring, that his neighbour should in any case be a loser for his sake.

Let us therefore be sure to root out of our hearts that inordinate self-love, which we now see reigning almost in all mankind, and hate it where-ever we see it, if it be not in ourselves, where indeed we too seldom hate it, because we seldom see it; so blind doth it make us at home. Let us learn to love our neighbours as ourselves, not in word, neither in tongue; but in deed, and in truth, I John iii. 18. Let our love be without dissimulation, Rom. xii. 9. Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love, in bonour preferring one another, ver. 10. All things what soever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so to them, Mat. vii. 12.

Q. What dost thou chiefly learn by these command-

A. I learn two things; my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour.

Q. What is thy duty towards God?

A. My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my foul, and with all my ftrength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name, and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Q. What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?

A My duty towards my neighbour is, to love him as myself, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my father and mother. To honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart.

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To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. Not to covet, nor desire other mens goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me.

All that you have here faid, concerning your duty to God, and to your neighbour, is no more than what your godfathers and godmothers promifed for you in your baptism, that you would keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your life. And all this hath been fo fully explained to you in what I have faid of the commandments, that I cannot think it needful to fay any more of any of those things which here you fay are your duties to God, or to your neighbour. You have acknowledged, in the beginning of your catechism, that you verily think yourself bound to do as they have promised for you, and have promised also, that by God's help you will do fo. And you added, that you pray'd unto God to give you his grace, that you may continue in the fame unto your lives end. And it is very needful for you so to do; for, my good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to ferve him without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Tell me in earnest;

Q. Do you think that you are able of yourself to keep God's commandments?

A. No; Without Christ we can do nothing, John xv. 5.

Q. Are then the commandments of God impossible to

be kept by us?

A. No; We may do all things thro' Christ that strengtheneth us, Phil. iv. 13.

O. How

Q. How doth Christ strengthen us?

A. By his spirit in the inner man, Eph. iii. 16.

Q. Is all your ability to do good from God?

A. Yes; It is God that worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13.

Q. Can you merit any thing of God by your own

righteousness?

A. No; By grace we are faved thro' faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, Epb. ii. 8.

Q. How may we get this saving grace of faith?

A. Faith is a fruit of the spirit, and cometh ordinarily by hearing the word of God, Gal. v. 22. Rom. x. 17.

Q. Must you then diligently attend to the word

preached?

A. Yes; How shall we hear without a preacher? Rom. x. 14. Be swift to hear, Jam. i. 1.

Q. Is the bare preaching of the word enough of itself

to make one a believer?

- A. No; Neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase, I Cor. iii. 7.
- §. Whatsoever it be that God hath commanded or for biddenus, (as hath been often told you, and indeed cannot be told you too often) it is commanded or forbidden in pure love to our souls, and for our good: You must therefore believe in the first place, that he never commands us any thing as a necessary duty, or without the performance whereof he will not save us, which it is impossible for us to perform. God always (we may be sure of it) deals with us most sincerely, both in his commands and promises; and no more mocketh us, than he will endure to be mocked by us. It was in Adam's power, when he was created, to have continued innocent by keeping the law of innocence, under which he then lived: And after this, God gave his commands and statutes

unto Israel for their good always, Deut. vi. 24. X. 13. xxx. 15. See, (faith he) I have fet before thee this day life and good, death and evil; therefore chuse life, that both thou and thy feed may live, ver. 19. And our bleffed Jesus hath made the keeping of the commandments much easier now to us, than formerly it was unto the Israelites: For his fake, instead of Adam's innocence, which is still our natural debt as we are men, God accepts of our fincerity. And for the grievous load laid on the Israelites, that especially of the law of ceremonies, he hath made us an easy yoke, and a light burden, Mat. xi. 30. There can be therefore now no impossibility in the things that God commands us: If with heart and good will, we fet about them, and to this end, diligently make use of all the helps and means, which God, thro' Christ, doth

afford us, we may acceptably do them.

Notwithstanding the great depravation of our nature, we may yet abstain from the doing of many finful things by the strength of nature, persuaded only by our own natural reason to abhor them. We may also do a great many good things, such as it is our christian duty to do, being thereunto persuaded only by natural reason: Hence some heathens have been famous for their good deeds, and have left us in their books many excellent reasons to persuade all men to live virtuously: And this cannot feem strange to any one, that seriously considers (among many others) these few things: First, That many fins are, in their nature, contrary to some mens natural inclinations, tempers, and constitutions; and reason in such persons, being wholly freed from the temptations to fuch fins, can better judge of the foulness of them. Thus one man naturally hates drunkenness, another uncleanness, another all base actions, as theft, deceit, lying, and fuch-like, and meets with no temptation to them: Some persons are fo naturally inclined to fome good things, that it would be found a hard matter to tempt them to a neglect

neglect of them. Thus some are naturally merciful. and liberal, and ambitious to do noble things. Secondly. The natural love that one hath for some forts of fins, makes him perfectly to hate another fin, which will by no means agree or fuit with the other. Thus covetoutness, or the love of wealth, makes one hate prodigality, and wasting, and every fin that is expensive or costly: Thus vain glory suffers not one to omit either cost or labour in laudable things whereby he may win praise. Thirdly. Reason, if confulted, will naturally teach one the equity and benefits of most good actions, their agreeableness to human nature, as also the inconveniencies and mischiefs of most sins; and this one consideration is often enough to over-rule his natural inclination, and to persuade him to act quite contrary to it. Lastly. A natural modelty, and fear of shame, dread of punishments, and hope of rewards, have a great power over men, restraining them from the commission of (at least) the outward acts of many fins, and strongly moving them to the outward acts of many virtues. The laws in every nation presuppose all this, and take for granted a natural power in men, of doing or leaving undone what is commanded; else were they made to no other purpose, but to punish people for not doing what they cannot do, or for not abstaining from that, from which they cannot abstain.

Yet is nothing of all this which hath here been faid concerning the power of nature, contrary to what you are here taught of the necessity of God's help: For granting, that of ourselves we were able to keep some of God's commandments, yet it follows not hence, that we are able to keep them all: But indeed we are not able to keep any one of them as we ought to do; for tho' we may do some things commanded, and abstain from some things forbidden, yet it follows not, that we do either the one or the other, for those ends, and after that manner as God would have us: Without the help of God's special grace we

cannot do this; and fo long, whatfoever we do is unacceptable to God, tho' good in itself, and beneficial to men.

Yet this special grace doth not advance us to a state of persection here on earth, as some contend that it doth. In many things we offend all, Jam. iii. 2. Only by the spirit of God we are new-born, and made new creatures, fobn iii. 8. Gal. vi. 15. and there is a new principle of spiritual life and power put into us; and now, (to use St. Paul's words) Gal. ii. 20. we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us. I know (saith he) that in me, that is, in my sless, dwelleth no good thing, Rom. vii. 18. I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members, ver. 23. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! I thank

God, thro' Tefus Christ our Lord, ver. 24, 25.

Seeing now we find in ourselves, even after regeneration, or new-birth, very strong and restless inclinations to fin, and a very great appetite to the things which God hath forbidden, and to whatfoever is pleafing to our flesh and corrupt nature; and feeing, when our mind or reason checks us, and when, upon rational convictions, we are come up to fuch refolutions, as we doubt not but to keep; yet we find these finful inclinations warring against our reason and resolution, and, thro' all opposition, captivating us again to the law of fin in our flesh: And seeing that the tempter is always very bufy in beguiling us, and his temptations are very strong, and fitly suited to our natural tempers, affaulting us also very suddenly, and by furprize, observing where our weakness lies; and seeing that we have much necessary business to look after, and many distractions of mind we have about them; and feeing our nature is too weak to be always awake, and to use all that watchfulness and circumspection which seems necessary; notwithstanding that, both our own natural reason doth

doth perfuade us, and our minds furnished with the principles and precepts of the christian religion command us; yet after all our most serious debates with our own hearts, and all the most earnest and unfeigned resolutions of our will, we find by sad and daily experience, that the flesh is in many things too hard for us. And therefore is it necessary, that we have a supernatural power, even that of the special grace of God, to help us to keep God's commandments. What elfe but this can controll our vitious inclinations, subdue the lusts of the flesh, and make us strong enough, and willing enough to master the affections thereof, and to bring ourselves to an universal, fincere, and persevering obedience to God's holy will and commandments? We must therefore. to this end, use constantly and diligently all the helps and means of grace, which in the holy scripture are commended to our use, and especially prayer.

## THE

## Scripture Catechist, &c.

## PART III.

S. Question. S. Prayer a means of obtaining grace?

A. Yes; Therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, Heb. iv. 16.

Q. Will God give grace to them that pray?

A. Yes; Our heavenly Father will give the holy spirit to them that ask him, Luke xi. 13.

Q. To whom, and in whose name must we pray?

A. Whatsoever we shall ask the Father in Christ's name, he will give it us.

Q. Must we pray often?

A. Yes; We ought always to pray, and not to faint, Luke xviii. 1.

Q. Doth not God know our needs, before we inform

bim of them by prayer?

A. Yes; Our heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask, Mat. vi. 8.

Q. Must we be earnest and fervent in prayer?

A. Yes; We must ask, seek, and knock; continuing instant in prayer, and watching thereunto, Mat. vii. 7. Rom. xii. 12. Col. iv. 2.

Q. For whom must we pray?

A. Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks are to be made for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1.

Q. Must thanksgiving be joined with prayer?

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A. Yes; By Christ we must offer the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks in his name. In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thansgiving, we must let our requests be made known unto God, Heb. xiii. 15. Pbil. iv. 6.

Q. Will God hear our prayers, if we continue

wicked?

A. No; If we regard iniquity in our heart God, will not hear us, Pfal. lxvi. 18.

Q. What then must we do to be heard?

A. We must lift up holy hands unto God, 1 Tim.

Q. What things are we to pray for?

A. The things that are according to God's will, 1 70bn v. 14.

Q. Do we want good things, because we pray not?

A. Yes; We have not, because we ask not, 7am.

iv. 2.

Q. Doth God give always what we ask?

A. No; We ask and receive not, because we ask amis, that we may consume it on our lusts, fam. iv.3.

Q. Must we not pray in faith?

A. Yes; We are to ask in faith, nothing wavering, 7am. i. 8.

Q. What things are we chiefly to avoid in prayer?

A. Hypocrify, or praying as the hypocrites do, to be feen of men in prayer, and heathenish superstition, or the using of vain repetitions, thinking we shall be heard for our much speaking; vain-glory, boasting of our doings, as the Pharisee, Luke xviii.

9. Wicked ends, as the Scribes making long prayers for a shew, and then devouring of widows houses, Mat. vi. 5, 7. Luke xviii. 9. xx. 47.

Q. Where must we pray?

A. We are to pray every-where, 1 Tim. vi. 2. 8.

Q. What place is fittest for private prayer?

A. The closet or privatest place, Mat. vi. 6:

Q. What is the fittest place for publick prayer?

A. God's

A. God's house, called the house of prayer, Mat. xxi. 13.

Q. May we use a prescribed form of prayer?

A. Yes; Else our Saviour would not have bidden us, when we pray, to say, Our Father, which art in heaven, Luke xi. 2.

I have here asked you a great many questions concerning the great duty of prayer, because it is necessary for you to be very thoroughly instructed in it. For it is so important a duty, and so universally necessary to all men, that whatsoever it may please God in his unsearchable wisdom, and immense goodness sometimes to do for them who neglect this duty, yet hath he not given us the least assurance, or promise, or any encouragement at all to hope, that we shall receive any good thing from him without it.

I do therefore befeech you, every one, with all poffible earnestness, that you be very careful not to neglect this so necessary duty. And if it be the hard fortune of any of you, to live under fuch irreligious parents, or maiters of families, as take not care to fet up the worship of God in their families, and to call you to worship together daily, as you ought to do; yet be fure that you be more kind to yourfelves, than they are to you. Be fure you never forget, nor neglect to pray privately, both morning and evening, and as often as you can besides, both for yourselves and others. I shall not need to say much more of this duty now. The many places of scriptures, whence you have taken your answers to the questions which I have asked you, do instruct you in most things belonging to this duty. There are but a few things wherein you can need my help, and a farther explanation.

First, It is necessary you should rightly understand what prayer is. You must observe then, that prayer, generally taken, is a very serious, devout, and most humble

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humble application of the mind and heart to God, as the Author of our being and happinness, and the Giver of every good gift; acknowledging our being to be from him, and all our dependence to be on him; and our utter disability to subsist one moment, or to do any thing at all without his help, and earnestly befeeching him of his goodness to do whatfoever is needful for us. Prayer is therefore called by the pfalmist, a lifting up of the foul unto God: Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my foul, Pfal. xxv. 1. lxxxvi. 4. cxliii. 8. Even so let us lift up our hearts, with our hands, unto God in the heavens, And all this is to be done with the Lam. iii. 41. highest admiration of the incomprehensible excellency of his glorious Majesty; the most humble adoration of his divine nature and perfections, his invincible power, his unerring wisdom, his unfailing goodness; saying again with the holy psalmist, O Lord our God, bow excellent is thy name, in all the earth! Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens, Pfal. vi. I. Thou art, O Lord, glorious in holinefs, fearful in praises, doing wonders, Exod. xv. 11. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; thou art exalted above all, I Chron. xxix. II. Bless the Lord, O my foul; O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art cloathed with honour and majesty; who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, Psal. civ. 1. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise? Psal. cvi. 2.

And as we must list up our hearts in humble admiration and adoration; so must we also do in the chearfullest exultations of holy joy, and heavenly delight, which we take in the lively sense of the divine goodness and love towards sinners; saying again with the holy psalmist, O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation, Psal. xcv. 1. We will love the Lord our strength, Psal. xviii. 1. As the hart panteth

after the water-brooks, so pant our souls after thee, O God. Our fouls thirst for the living God, Pfal. xlii. 1, 2. Whom have we in beaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that we defire besides thee. Pfal. Ixxiii. 25. So in most hearty praise and thanksgiving, let us enter into bis gates with thankfgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name, Pfal. c. 4. Also, in the most bumble and penitent confession of our sins, saying, We acknowledge our transgressions, and our sins are ever before us. Against thee have we sinned, and done these evils in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Pfal. li. 3, 4. Again, In the comfortable expressions of our bope and trust, faying, Our eyes are unto thee. O God the Lord; in thee is my trust; leave not my Soul destitute, Pial. cxli. 6. In thee, O Lord, do I hope, thou shalt bear me, O Lord my God, Pfal. xxxviii. 15. In acts of devotion and refignation, faying, Not our will, but thine be done; I am thine, fave me, for I have fought thy precepts, Pfal. cxix. 94. Thy vows are upon me, O God; I will render praises unto thee, Pfal. lvi. 12. I have fworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments, Pfal. cxix. 106. Prayer is such a lifting up of the heart unto God as this, or a pouring out of our fouls unto God, I Sam. v. 15.

In this heavenly duty we ought to be very conftant and frequent; and that with all humility of foul and body, and fervency or earnestness of mind. Hence we are commanded to pray without ceasing, I Thess. v. 17. Never giving over this duty to our lives end. Watch ye, and pray always, Luke xxi. 36. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints, Eph. vi. 18. Laying wait for all opportunities of praying, and endeavouring to keep your souls always in a praying temper, shunning all sin, and every thing that

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that may unfit and indispose them for prayer, and fo ordering and fore-casting all your worldly business, that it may be no hindrance to you, but that you may in all occasions be ready to pray, at least by holy ejaculations; evening, and morning, and at noonday will I pray, (faid the devout pfalmift) and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice, Pfal. lv. 17. At midnight will I rise, and give thanks unto thee, Pfal. cxix. 62. The apostles gave themselves continually to prayer, Acts vi. 4. Our blessed Jesus rising early, a great while before day, went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed, Mark i. 35. He continued fometimes all night in prayer, Luke vi. 12. In the days of his flesh be offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, Heb. v. 7. He fell on his face and prayed, Mat. vi. 39. He kneeled down and prayed, Luke xxii. 41. And that very earnestly, ver. 44.

When you pray, you must take heed how you fanfy you are come to inform God, as if he knew not what we wanted or defired, till we told him of For God knoweth all things, even the fecrets of our hearts, and our very thoughts afar off. you pray in obedience to his command, and to do his will; and because thereby you acknowledge your total dependence on him for every thing. Prayer is an act of homage, which you pay unto God, whereby you acknowledge him to be the supreme Being, and fovereign Lord, disposing of all things as he It is a token of humiliation and felf-abasement, owning his fulness, and our own emptiness; his power, and our own weakness; his all-sufficiency, and our impotence and need. And hereby become we better qualified and disposed for the receiving

of good things from him.

In all your prayers, you must be sure that it is your heart which prayeth. Your prayer must be, not only a pouring forth of words before God, whether they be such words as we are taught in books,

or such as we conceive of ourselves; but a very unfeigned, sincere, and devout pouring out of the defires and other affections of the soul. Beware of drawing near unto God with your tongue and lips, having your hearts or affections far from him, Mat. xv. 8. I cried with my whole heart, said the psalmist, Psal. cxix. 145. My heart crieth out for the living

God, Pfal. lxxxiv. 2.

See that you be very humble in prayer, and that you proudly arrogate nothing to yourselves; nor hope that God will hear you, and grant your requests, for any goodness or worth of your own. Say, with the humble publican, God, be merciful to me a finner! Abhor the proud Pharifees and quakers way of praying, who talk great things of themselves in prayer, as if they had already attained to that state of perfection, that makes it below them to confess their sins unto God, or to pray for the pardon of them; and therefore they declame against the prayers of the church, wherein both are used. We are taught, That God forgetteth not the cry of the humble, Pfal. ix. 12. That he refifteth the proud, but giveth grace to the bumble, I Pet. v. 5. I am ashamed and blush (faid holy Ezra) to lift up my face to thee, Ezra ix. 6. Be fure that you be truly penitent, whenfoever you go to pray unto God; for the Lord is far from the wicked, but heareth the prayer of the righteous, Prov. xv. 29. He that turneth away his ear from bearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination, Prov. xxviii. 9.

You faid, You must pray in faith, and you must do so indeed, or not hope to be heard. But then to pray in faith is not to believe, that God will certainly give you those very good things which you ask of him in prayer; for that he doth not always do. But you are to believe, that if you be duly qualified for praying, God doth certainly hear your prayer, and doth graciously accept of it, and will make a very gracious return to it; not so, it may

be, as you at present desire he would, but so as he knows it will be best for you. Spiritual things necessary for your eternal salvation he will certainly give you, if you add to prayer the use of all other means of grace which he hath ordained; and temporal things he will also give you in such a measure as he well knows will be most profitable for you, and con-

duce most to your eternal happiness.

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You must be sure to pray to God only; for prayer is a principal part of religious worship, which must not be given to any created thing. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come, Psal. Ixv. 2. And as you are to pray unto God only; fo are you to pray unto him, not in the name, or thro' the mediation and intercession of any creature, whether faint or angel; but of Jesus Christ only; for he who is the propitiation for our fins, is also our advocate with the father, making intercession for us, I John ii. 1. 2. He hath promised, that what soever we shall ask the Father in his name, he will do it, that the Father may be glorified in him, John xiv. 13. Again, (faith he) What soever you shall ask the Father in my name, be will give it you, John xvi. 23. he is able to fave all them to the uttermost, that come unto God by bim, feeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25.

This is as much as needs to be told you now of the duty of prayer in general. What more is needful to be taught you concerning it, you may, I hope, learn it from what is yet to be faid on the se-

veral parts of the LORD's PRAYER.

Q. Let me hear if thou canst say the Lord's prayer?

A. Our Father, which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Z. 4 Q. What

Q. What desirest thou of God in this prayer?

A. I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the Giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me, and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do.

And I pray unto God, that he will fend us all things that be needful both for our fouls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our fins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers, ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.

And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore

I fay, Amen. So be it.

Q. Why call you this the LORD's PRATER?

A. Because our blessed Lord Jesus Christ taught it to his disciples, Mat. vi. 9. Luke xi. 2.

You fay very right. Our bleffed Lord taught it to his disciples, saying in St. Mat. After this manner pray ye. And tho' it be lawful to use other prayers as there is occasion, yet is this to be the pattern which we are to imitate in all our prayers. Whatever we pray for, we must see that it be agreeable to what we are here taught by Christ to pray for; fo shall we be fure that what we ask is according to the will of God, and he will give a gracious answer to our prayers. And next, you are to observe, that St. Luke faith, that our Lord, when he taught this prayer, said, When ye pray, say, Our father, &c. Whence it feems to be plain, that our Saviour did not only herein fet us a perfect copy or pattern after which to compose our own prayers which we make; but also a complete form of prayer which we should use when we pray.

For any one therefore to question the lawfulness of using a set or prescribed form of prayer, as if one that prayed by such a form prayed not by the Spirit, or (as they love to word it) stinted the Spirit, feems to be an unexcuseable ignorance or perverseness. For such an one as doth thus, must either call in question our blessed Saviour's authority and discretion too in commanding, when we pray, to say these words; or at least the veracity and truth of St. Luke, who tells us, he gave us this command. If we be satisfied, that our Saviour commanded, as St. Luke affirms that he did, we laying aside this form, flight his authority: and if we use it not, because that it seems to us less edifying, or because we think we cannot use it and pray by the Spirit, or for fear we shall fo be guilty of limiting or stinting the Spirit, we undervalue his wisdom in prescribing it, and make ourselves fitter judges than he, of what is convenient to be used in his church.

Indeed to omit and lay aside the use of this prayer, especially in our more solemn devotion, and God's publick worship, seems a very great presumption, a trusting too much to our own wisdom and discretion, and to the perfection of our own prayers, whether studied and composed before-hand, or suddenly conceived upon the place, which last some people have been made to think to be the only true spiritual prayers. I would advise you all to the constant use of this most perfect and comprehensive prayer in all your addresses to God; for so are you sure to pray as the Spirit of Christ teacheth you to pray.

In which prayer you are to observe these things: First, A form of invocation, or calling upon God in prayer. Secondly, A certain number of petitions for the things we are in prayer to desire, and the order wherein Christ hath set them. Thirdly, A conclusion by way of doxology, or confession of praise unto God. All these you are, in order, to be

instructed in.

Q. In what words have you the form of invoca-

A. In these words, Our Father, which are in heaven, the Giver of all good gifts,

Q. Whom do you in these words call Our Father?

A. God, who supplieth all our needs according to his riches in glory, by Jesus Christ, Phil. iv. 19. 20.

Q. What encouragement have you given you to call upon him, by Christ's teaching you to call him

Our Father ?

A. Very much; For as a father pitieth his children. so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, and will give good things to them that ask him, Plat ciii. 13. Mat. vii. 11.

Q. Why say you, Which art in beaven? Seeing

God is every-where.

A. Because he is our heavenly Father, and is in a more eminent manner in the heavens, and in the heavens prepared his throne, P(al. cxv. 3. ciii. 19.

Q. Can you hope for no blessing, but from your Fa-

ther in beaven?

A. No; Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, Fames i. 17.

Q. Why call you God, Our, rather than My Fa-

ther?

A. Because we have all one Father, and are commanded to make prayers for all men, Mal. ii. 10. 1 Tim. ii. I.

To call upon God, is a phrase in scripture used to fignify our praying unto him. And it is ill becoming a poor helpless creature, such as we are, yea offenders and malefactors, whose life by sin is forfeited into his hands, who are most justly condemned to die, when we come to petition for mercy, and supplicate at the throne of grace for favour and pardon, to rush in rudely upon his glorious Majesty, without fome expressions of reverence, and fignifications of g

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that due sense which we have of his greatness and glory. Who (faith the prophet) would not fear thee, O King of nations? Jer. x. 7. I am a great King, faith the Lord of hofts, and my name dreadful among the heathen, Mal. i. 14. We should, in all our humble addresses which we make unto God, give him the honour of his divine attributes, calling upon him by those titles whereby he delights to be known and glorified in the world. And of these we find good store in the holy scriptures, especially in the book of Psalms. And we should of all others chiefly chuse and pick out such as may serve best to quicken in our fouls those affections, which are most proper for humble supplicants. Such, above all others, must they be, which our bleffed Saviour himself hath put into our mouths, as he hath done thefe, Our Father, &c.

By nature (as you have been taught in your catechism) we are sinners, and the children of wrath. Therefore well might we tremble to call upon that great and glorious, holy and righteous God, whom we have by our fins provoked to destroy us. might well fear and tremble before him as a righteous Judge, and cry aloud for mercy in despair of ever obtaining it, were he not also our Father, and did he not yet retain some bowels of mercy, and a great tenderness of compassion towards us. And it is only for the merits, and thro' the mediation of our gracious Redeemer Christ Jesus, that he vouchsafeth us the Spirit of adoption, and gives us the freedom of access unto him. Thro' him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father, Eph. ii. 18. We have it, I fay, for his fake; and therefore must we pray in his name, if we hope to be heard. For tho' one God created us all, Mal. ii. 10. And there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thro' all, and in us all, Eph. iv. 6. Yet we have done so much to offend him, and to turn away his face from us, that we could have no hope of regaining his favour and bleffing, did he not accept of us thro' the Son of his love, Jefus Christ.

Christ. We are the children of God no otherwise than by faith in Chrift Jesus, Gal. iii. 26. To them that receive bim, by faith, giveth be power to become the fous of God, even to them who believe in his name. John i. 12. As many as are led by the Spirit of God. they are the fons of God, and receive the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, Rom. viii. 14, 15. Gal. iv. 6. Our great comfort and encouragement here you fee to be this, That Christ hath taught us, and his holy Spirit enables us, to call God our Father.

And here you also see, that this prayer is well fitted for the use of all christians, who by their baptism are federally and facramentally made members of Christ, and the children of God. Their Father is God, not only by creation, (as he is the Father of all) but by adoption and regeneration of his holy Spirit, as you have already heard. It was a very comfortable word, which our bleffed Lord and Redeemer, immediately after his refurrection, fent to his disciples by Mary : Go (faith he) to my bretbren, and fay unto them. I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God, John xx. 17. Nothing can more encourage to make our supplications unto almighty God, than this, that the eternal and only begotten Son of God, who is our advocate with the Father, hath been pleased to call us his brethren and friends, and hath affured us, That his God and Father is also our God and Father.

But then it must needs become us to behave our felves towards God as dutiful and loving children. To be followers of God as dear children, and to walk in love, as Christ bath loved us, Eph. v. 1, 2. Neither is it love only that's due from children to their parents; but awe, reverence, and obedience, without which we are too prefumptuous in calling upon God as our Father. For, as a Father, he expects to find in us a very ready and willing mind to do his will, even as he hath shewed himself most ready and willing

willing to pity our infirmities, to pardon our offences, and to do all good things for us. A son bonoureth his father, and a servant his master. If I then be a Father, (saith God) where is mine honour? And if I be a Master, where is my fear? Mal. i. 6. When the prodigal son in the parable grew humble and penitent, this was his comfort in his distress, That he had a father to return home unto: I will arise, (saith he) and go to my father. And his father saw him a great way off, and had compassion, and ran out to meet him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; he cloathed him as his son, and feasted him, and rejoiced greatly, that he had sound him, Luke xv.

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Whilst we draw near unto God, with a great deal of confidence in his mercy and fatherly compassion. we must also remember, that he is not like our fathers, which are upon earth; but he is our Father. which is in heaven, or our heavenly Father, infinitely more exalted above us in the excellency of his divine nature, than the heaven of heavens is above this earth whereon we tread. What soever be pleaseth, that he doth in heaven, and in earth, in the feas, and in all deep places, Pfal. cxxxv. 6. Exalt ye therefore the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for be is boly, Pfal. xcix. 5. Tho' he be every-where prefent, yet are you to draw near unto him in Christ as feated on his throne of majesty, in the highest heavens; and in the profoundest adoration, fall down on your knees, or lay your faces in the dust before him. His being in heaven, and Lord of heaven and earth, of men and angels, commanding and over-ruling all things at his pleasure, shews us, That he is an almighty as well as most merciful Father, and is as able, as he is willing to do us good. Which should also put us in remembrance, that he is as able to punish the rebellious, as to bless and reward the obedient. He hath all the hofts of heaven, and the armies of the earth at his command: He commands the winds, and the leas

feas; and they obey him. He can make all his creatures the executioners of his wrath, and fet them in battle array to fight either for us, or against us. Because he ruleth in the heavens, we may safely trust him; but for the same reason we must not prefume to dishonour him. Now I know (faith David) that the Lord will bear his anointed from his holy beaven, with the saving strength of his right-hand, Pfal. xx. 6. Look down from thy boly habitation, from beaven, and bless thy people Israel, Deut. xxvi. 15. Hear thou from beaven thy dwelling place, 2 Chron. vi. 21. He sendeth from beaven, and saveth us, Pfal. lvii. 3. He canseth his judgments to be heard from beaven, Pfal. Ixxvi. 8. I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, Pfal. v. 3. Unto thee lift I up mine eyes. O thou that dwellest in the beavens, Pfal. cxxiii. I.

If we expect to be heard by our heavenly Father, we must pray with heavenly affections, setting them on things above, and not on things upon the earth, Col. iii. 1, 2. Our Conversation must be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Phil. iii. 20.

And now, lastly, consider, That as God, our heavenly Father, admits us, as his children, to draw near unto him, and to prefent our supplications unto his divine Majesty in heaven; so are we to look upon ourselves as brethren, and the children of one Father, and fellow-members of the same heavenly society. And tho' every one of us may fay, My Father, applying the fatherly relation and affection of God in Tefus Chrift, every one to himfelf, for his own confolation, for indeed he is a Father to all his obedient children, and to every one of them; to the whole church, and every fingle member of it : Yet our bleffed Saviour teacheth us, when we pray, rather as members of the universal church, which is his body, and so as members of one another, bound all of us to have the same love and care one for another. If one member a-

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member fuffer, all the members suffering with it; and if one member rejoice, all the members rejoicing with it, I Cor. xii. 25, 26. As we are to love every one his neighbour as himself; so are we to pray every one for his neighbour, as for himfelf, not faying, Give, forgive, deliver me, only as if we were concerned every one for himself only, and not for our brethren; but Give, forgive, and deliver us, even the whole church, yea, and all mankind; and in our calling on God, not every one to appropriate him to himfelf, or as fome, who call themselves the godly, feem too much to do, to his own party and fect; but we are to acknowledge him to be, and most heartily desire that he may ever be, a Father to others as well as to ourselves and so praying for all men, especially we are to pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth. therefore we say not, My Father; but Our Father.

This I take to be enough to make you understand the true meaning and reason of this form of invocation. After which follow fix or feven petitions, it's no matter which, fo we understand them and use them aright. In the three former, we are taught. to ask the things which more immediately relate to God's glory and honour. In the three latter, the things which are of immediate concernment to ourfelves. In the former we are taught to pray, First, that God may be honoured and glorified by all men all the world over. Secondly, That his kingdom may flourish, and be inlarged upon earth, and finally completed and perfected in heaven. Thirdly, That all his subjects may yield a ready, chearful, univerfal, and persevering obedience to his will, that God may in all things be glorified by us, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

Q. What's the first petition in the Lord's prayer?

A. Hallowed be thy name, Mat. vi. 9.

Q. What desirest thou of God in this petition?
A. That

A. That God the Giver of good gifts would fend his grace unto me, and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do: Or that all nations, whom he hath made, may come and worship before him, and glorify his Name, Psal. lxxxvi. 9.

You have been taught in the exposition of the third commandment, what it is that the Name of God signisieth for the most part in holy scripture. That is, God himself, as made known unto the world. Thus, to call upon God's name, is to call upon God, Pfal. lxxx. 18. To know God's name, is to know God, Pfal. ix. 10. To sing praises to God's name, 2 Sam xxii. 5. To fear God's name, Neb. i. 11. To confess God's name, 2 Chron. vi. 24. To love God's name, Pfal. v. 11. and other such-like expressions, are all to be understood in the same manner, of God himself, signifying to know, fear, sing praises to, confess and love God, &c.

To hallow either a person or a thing, is either, First, To make holy that which had no holiness before; or to acknowledge, esteem, honour and use as holy, what is holy in itself. Again, To hallow, or make holy, is, either to consecrate, that is, to separate, set apart, and dedicate, for some sacred and religious use, that which was before of ordinary and common use; or to cleanse and purify from

some contracted filth and pollution.

Hence to hallow God's name, being no more but to hallow God himself, cannot signify to make God holy; for God both is, and eternally was, most perfectly pure and holy, free from all manner of juncleanness and pollution, and from every thing that defileth, as doth sin. Moreover, God is not a common Being, of the same nature, worth and excellency with other things, or to be used as they are; but is infinitely exalted in perfection and glory above all the world; seeing all things are no more but the works of his hands, the production of his divine power,

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power, wisdom, and goodness. Therefore by hallowing, fanctifying, or glorifying God, we are not to understand the making of God more holy, or the exalting of him to some degrees of greater height or dignity, or the making of him more great and glorious in himself; for all this is impossible to be done, and we are not taught to pray that we may have grace to do what is impossible. Nay, this were not to hallow and exalt, but to lessen God in our esteem, accounting him so impersect a Being, as to be capable of additions to his persection, and that by us his sinful creatures.

What we therefore are here taught to pray for, must needs be this, That God in all his glorious attributes, and in all his wonderous works, may be made known unto us, and to all men; that we may all believe and acknowledge him to be just such an one as in truth he is, and hath in his word and works manifested himself to be: That we all honour and worship him as God, and behave ourselves towards him, as it becometh rational creatures to do toward our most holy and glorious Creator, infinitely exalted in the transcendent excellencies of his divine nature, above all men and angels, the services and praises of both, and as such to be reverenced and adored by

We pray then, that his glory may be so revealed to us and all men, That all men may know, that he whose name alone is fEHOVAH, is the Most High over all the earth, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. That we may all fanctify (or exalt) the Lord of hosts himself in our hearts, and let him be our fear and dread, Isa. viii. 13. Sing forth the honour of his name, and make his praise glorious, Psal. lxvi. 1, 2. That his glory may be declared among the heathen, and his wonders among all people, Psal. xcvi. iii. That his way may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations, Psal. lxvii. 2. That according to promise, from the rising of the fun, even to the A a

going down of the same, his name may be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense may be offered unto his name, and a pure offering, Mal. i. 11. That whatsoever we do, we may do to the glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. That our light may so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven, Mat. v. 16. That God in all things may be glori-

fied thro' Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. iv. 11.

This petition being set in the first place by our blessed Saviour in this most perfect pattern, and form of prayer, teacheth us, That the same thing, which is to be made by us the end of all our actions, ought to have the first place given it in our desires, affections, and prayers; which is the honour and glory of God. For this it is for which he made us, redeemed, and sanctifieth us, and which we should have therefore always before our eyes, as the end of our conversation, the mark at which in every thing we aim, and that indeed for which we live in the world. If it be not our principal design in all we do to glorify God, all that we do avails us nothing. Therefore for God's grace to enable us to do this, we first pray in this petition.

Q. What's the second petition?

A. Thy kingdom come.

Q. What desire you of God in this petition?

A. I defire him to fend his grace to us, and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him as we ought to do.

Q. Is not all the world God's kingdom already?

A. Yes; God is the King of all the earth, he reigneth over the heathen, he fitteth upon the throne of his holiness, P(al. iv. 7, 8.

Q. Is not Jesus Christ King of all the world?

A. Yes; God promised to give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Psal. ii. 8.

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Q. Pray you then that all nations may be converted,

and made Christ's willing subjects?

A. Yes; That all the kingdoms of the world may become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ, Rev. xi. 15.

Q. You pray then that Christ's church may be daily

enlarged?

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A. Yes; That the word of God may grow mightily, and prevail, and that God would add daily to his church such as shall be saved, Asts xix. 20. ii. 47.

Q. Pray you not that Christ may rule in your

bearts?

A. Yes; That he may dwell in our hearts by faith, and that every thought may be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, Epb. iii. 17. 2 Cor. x. 5.

Q. Pray you against the dominion of the devil and

fin !

A. Yes; That we may all be turned from the power of Satan unto God, that fin may not reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof, Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. vi. 12.

Then is God's name hallowed, when we honour him in his word, and all his holy ordinances; then is he truly glorified, when his absolute dominion is acknowledged, and we ferve him as our fovereign Lord, with a most free submission, and humble subjection to his laws and government. He is, by an unquestionable right, the absolute Monarch of the world; and he hath a commanding, and over-ruling power over all things in heaven, and earth yea, and hell too; and doth actually exercise his power over all things as it pleafeth him. This you have been taught, and no man can deny this, that knoweth what it is to serve God. But besides this universal kingdom of God's power, to which the devils themselves, whether they will or no, must needs be subject; there is allo, as you have already learned, a peculiar king-Aa2

dom of all willing and covenanting subjects; all bound by their own voluntary submission, vow and covenant, to live in constant obedience to the will of God, and this is the same with the holy catholick church, whereof Christ is the only head and king.

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Having heard what the kingdom of God fignifieth, we are now to fee what is the coming of his kingdom, which we here pray for. And this we may be made competently to understand, by considering, how great a part of the world is fallen away from their obedience to the true God, and continueth to this day, either in ignorance of him, or rebellion against him. Over all these, the devil doth yet bear rule. The world of mankind is divided into the children of God, and the children of the devil, 1 70hn iii, 10. And the children of the devil are the fame with them who are called the children of this world, Luke xvi. 8. And these are very numerous, whilst the children of the Lord are but a little flock, Luke xii. 32. The few that walk in the narrow way, Mat. vii. 14. Therefore is the devil called the God of this world, who blindeth the minds of them which believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And more than once or twice is he called, the prince of this world, John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. the prince of the power, or numerous army, of the air, who now worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. He holdeth a very great part of the world in gross ignorance, and vile flavery. Very many still, instead of the true and living God, worship idols, and facrifice to devils, & Cor. x. 20. Another great part of mankind, tho' they profess to worship the true God, are yet by the devil's instruments seduced, and drawn away from the truth, into superstition and herefy, and into all manner of fin and wickedness, and even into infidelity. So that the kingdom of God, confisting of regenerate and fanctified persons living in obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, is yet, in comparison of the many.

many, who follow the devil in the broad way to de-

struction, but a small number.

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Our holy Jesus hath therefore here taught us to pray, that the gospel of Christ, called also the gospel of the kingdom, Mat. iv. 23. and the word of the kingdom, Mat. xiii. 19. by the preaching whereof men are ordinarily called, directed, and encouraged to be members of Christ's kingdom, may be foundly preached, thankfully received, stedfastly believed, and religiously obeyed all over the world; that the word of the Lord may have its free course. and be glorified; and that the preachers of it may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, 2 Thest. iii. 1, 2. That the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into his harvest, Mat. ix. 38. That the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, may be so accounted of, and be found faithful, I Cor. iv. 1, 2.

We pray also, that the kings of the earth may be fo wife, and the judges thereof fo well instructed, as to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice with trembling, and to kiss the Son, lest he be angry, Psalm ii. 10, 11, 12. That kings may be the church's nurling fathers, and queens her nurling mothers, Isai. xlix. 23. That they may subject themselves to Christ, who is the Prince of all the kings of the earth, Rev. i. 5. and shew themselves ministers of God, for good to the people which he hath fet them to govern; that under their government, they may live quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty, Rom. xiii, 4. I Tim. ii. 2. That they may countenance and promote learning and piety, and take care that all their subjects be (as far as in them lieth) the subjects of Jesus Christ: That at the name of Jesus every knee may bow, and that every tongue may confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 10, 11.

We pray also, that the works of the devil may be destroyed, I John iii. 8. Rom. vi. 6. That every

thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God may be cast down, 2 Cor. x. 5. That we may feel the power of the kingdom of God fet up within us, in righteouineis, and peace, and joy of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. That all our members may be yielded up by us freely to be fervants to righteousness, unto holiness, Rom. vi. 19. That God would put his laws into our inward parts, and write them in our hearts, that he may be our God, and we his people, Fer. xxxi. 33. Heb. viii. 10. And that as we are all subjects of one and the same King, and live under the same laws, so we may all speak the same thing, and that there may be no divisions amongst us, but that we may be perfectly joined together in the fame mind, and in the fame judgment, I Cor. i. 10.

Lastly, That all Christ's enemies may be put under his feet; and that the last enemy, death, may be destroyed, and swallowed up in victory, I Cor. xv. 25. That after death we may rise again to life, that we may come forth out of our graves to the resurrection of life, John v. 28. And finally, that we may inherit the kingdom prepared for us, from the foun-

dation of the world, Mat. xxv. 34.

O. What's the third petition?

A Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven; that God would fend his grace unto us all, that we may obey him as we ought to do.

Q. Need you to pray for grace to do his will?

A. Yes; For it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 12.

Q. What is the sum of what you here ask?

A. That God would make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleafing in his fight, thro' Jesus Christ, Heb. xiii. 21.

Q. By whom mean you that God's will is done in

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A. By his angels that excel in firength, that do his commands, and hearken to the voice of his word, Plalm ciii. 20.

That God would give us all grace, to own him to be the only true God, to honour and glorify him as the maker, preferver, and governor of all the world, to submit ourselves chearfully to the laws of his kingdom, to be governed by Jesus Christ, and to live according to the rules of his holy gospel, most willingly to obey him, and to rest well satisfied with whatsoever he doth, or permitteth to be done in the world, is the sum of the three former petitions of this prayer. We give not unto God his due honour, if we own him not to be our sovereign Lord and King; and we own not his kingdom and dominion, if we do not his will in earth.

Now God's will is either the will of his precept, or that which sheweth us our duty, what he would have, or would not have us to do; or it is the will of his purpose and providence, whereby he himself determineth, and acteth, and doth, or suffereth to be done, whatfoever cometh to pass in heaven, or in We pray then, that by the grace of his Holy Spirit, preventing and affifting us, we may fo intirely resign ourselves to God, that his will may always be our will, and that we never will, defire, or act any thing that is not agreeable to, or contradicts his will; but may submit ourselves unto God, 7am. iv. 7. faying, with our Holy Lord, Not our will, but thine be done; and with the holy brethren, Acis xxi. 14. The will of the Lord be done. We pray, that we may stand perfect in all the will of God, Col. iv. 12. That whatever God commands us to do, we may do it heartily: Doing the will of God from the heart, Eph. vi. 6. That we may no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God, 1 Pet. iv. 2. That whatever God forbids, we may religiously abstain from it; that we may, as do the holy angels in heaven, prove what is Aa4

that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, Rom. xii. 2. attending to the voice of his word, understanding what the will of the Lord is, and what is acceptable to him, Eph. v. 10, 17. sincerely, chearfully, vigorously, and constantly observe it, and carefully watch against all sin, whether of omission or commission.

That whatsoever it shall please God, by his wise and righteous providence, to bring to pass in the world; we may, as the holy angels in heaven, rest satisfied with it, approve of it, and without any repining, murmuring, or discontent, readily submit

unto it.

How much we are concerned to pray for grace to do thus, we may learn from these, and the like words of holy scripture: Not every one, (saith Christ) that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in heaven, Mat. vii. 21. Whosever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother, Mark iii. 35. That is, as dear unto him, as any one in the nearest relation, can be to another. He that doth the will of God, abideth for ever,

I John ii. 17.

Let us all therefore be of this mind which was in Christ Jesus our Lord, saying, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work, John iv. 34. I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, John v. 30. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart: Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, Psalm xl. 8. Heb. x. 9. Let us pray with the Psalmist; Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God, thy Spirit is good, Psal. cxliii. 10. That we may always serve God with a perfect heart, and a willing mind, as David charged his son Solomon, I Chron. xxviii. 9. That we may all be Christ's willing people in the day of his power, Psal. cx. 3.

§. Q. Which is the fourth petition?

A. Give us this day our daily bread, Mat. vi. 11.

Q. What desirest thou of God in this petition?

A. I pray unto God, that he will fend us all things that be needful both for our fouls and bodies.

Q. Hath God promised to give you all things needful

for this life?

A. Yes; If we first seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us, Mat. vi. 33.

Q. Do you here pray for riches?

A. No; But with Agur, that God would give me neither poverty, nor riches, but food convenient for me, Prov. xxx. 8.

Q. Do you pray, that God would give you all needful

things without your own labour?

A. No; We must work with our own hands, that we may have lack of nothing, I Thess. iv. 11, 12.

Q. Do you pray, that whatever you get may be justly

gotten, and truly your own?

A. Yes; That we may work, and eat our own bread, 2 Thess. iii. 12.

Q. Can you maintain yourself by your own labour

without God's bleffing?

A. No; It is in vain to rife up early, to fit up late, to eat the bread of forrows: unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, Pfalm cxxvii. 1, 2.

Q. Can you live by bread, or your bodily food?

A. Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, Deut. viii. 3. Mat. iv. 4.

Q. Why do many, who pray for these things, sill

want them?

- A. We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss, that we may consume it on our lusts, 7am. iv. 3.
- §. After that our bleffed Saviour hath in this prayer taught us, how we are to defire in the first place

place, that God may have his due honour, worship, and obedience given him by all men; he not only alloweth, but teacheth us how also to ask all manner of needful things, both for our own, and other mens fouls and bodies. If God will have us to ferve him in this world, it is necessary that we live in this world, and in fuch a condition, that we may be able to ferve him according to his will: And that we may live to ferve him, we stand in need of such things as life cannot ordinarily be preserved without: Our heavenly Father knoweth, that we have need of all such things, Mat. vi. 32. and therefore our bleffed Saviour teach-

eth us to pray for them.

Indeed spiritual good things, are of as much more worth than temporal, or worldly and bodily things; as our fouls are of more worth than our bodies, and an eternal life of bleffedness, for which they fit us, than a short and troublesome life here upon earth: And therefore, feeing a man is not profited at all, by possessing, were it possible, the whole world, if he lose his own foul; it concerneth every one principally to pray for the food of his foul; and that God would fet such faithful and wife stewards over his houshold, as may give to every one his portion of meat in due season, Luke xii. 42. That God would never fend among us a famine of hearing the words of the Lord, Amos viii. 11. That we always may have and feed on the true and living bread which our Father giveth us from heaven, John vi. 32. The flesh and blood of Christ, which feedeth to eternal life, ver. 54. That God would continue unto us his holy ordinances, and give his bleffing to them, that by them our fouls may be nourished. Let this be our first care for ourselves.

After this, let us humbly beg of God fuch things as are needful for our bodies, our daily bread: Whereby is meant, whatfoever is needful for the prefer-

vation of life.

We are not taught to pray for life itself, or for a long life on earth; we are to leave that to God, to lengthen or shorten, as it pleaseth him; but we are taught to pray, that so long as it pleaseth him that we shall live, we may have such a measure of health, and strength, and other things, as we may live to his glory, and in his service.

We are not to pray for dainties, or superfluities of any kind, either for back or belly, but only for things needful, and enough for health, and strength, and for our present state and condition; that is, for the comfortable maintenance of ourselves and families, and the better performance of our christian duty in that place or station, whether in the church, or civil state, wherein God's providence hath set us.

We ask not for a long time to come, or for bread this day, which may fuffice for many days; but only daily bread, or bread fufficient for the day; and so are we daily to renew our petition, begging every day, that God addeth to our life, bread for that day; or as St. Luke expressent it, day by day, our

daily bread, Luke xi. 3.

We pray, that God would enable us to labour in fome honest and profitable calling, that we may thereby honestly procure for ourselves, by his blessing upon us, without any injustice to any one, such a livelihood as is enough; that what we so get, we may justly call our own, being not only the gift, but also the blessing of God our Father. Thus labouring conscientiously every one in his warrantable calling daily, and daily beseeching God to establish the work of our hands upon us, Psalm xc. 17. we may go to rest at night, taking no thought for the morrow, but leaving the morrow (if it come) to take thought for the things of itself, Mat. vi. 34.

We may pray, that God would bless our bread, and our water, and take sickness away from the midst of us: That nothing may cast her young, nor be barren in our land, Exod. xxiii. 25. That God

would abundantly bless our provision, and fatisfy our poor with bread, Pfal. cxxxii. 14. That we may not provoke God by our fins, and foolish wasting of what he gives us, to break our staff of bread, and to send a famine on the land, Ezek. xiv. 13. But that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands in our streets. and that our exen may be strong to labour, Psal. cxliv. 13, 14. That God would give us rain in due feafon, and the land may yield her increase, and the trees of the field may yield their fruit, Lev. xxvi. 4. That he would give us peace, that our swords may be beaten into plough-shares, and our spears into pruning books, Isai, ii. 4. That God would keep us from those all-devouring fins of pride, luxury, rioting, and drunkenness; from all intemperance, and prodigality; from floth, and idleness; which eat up in many places the bread both of children and the poor; and also from covetousness, and grinding the faces of the poor, and all hard-heartedness, and unmercifulness to the widow, the fatherless, the weak and fickly: That they who are rich in this world, may be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. That be that bath two coats, may be ready to give to him that hath none; and be that bath meat, may do likewise, Luke iii. II. That so be who ministreth seed to the sower, may both minister bread for our food, and multiply our seed sown, and increase the fruits of our righteousness, 2 Cor. ix. Io.

Q. What's the fifth petition?

A. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

Q. What desirest thou of God in these words?

A. That he would be merciful unto us, and forgive us our fins.

Q. Will not God forgive you, if you forgive not others?

A. No;

A. No; If we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us, Mat. vi. 14.

Q. Do you not pray for grace to repent of your

fins ?

A. Yes; I pray for a godly forrow, which worketh repentance unto falvation, never to be repented of, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Q. Will God forgive bim that for saketh not bis

fins !

A. No; He that confesseth, and forsaketh his sin, shall have mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 70hn i. 9.

6. What St. Luke calleth trespasses, St. Matthews calleth debts: Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, Mat. vi. 12. And instead of these words, As we forgive them that trespass against us; St. Luke hath these. For we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and what we call our trespasses, he calls our fins, Luke xi. 4. As then the prayer which you are taught, differeth in words from the prayer in both the Evangelists, so doth it also as rehearsed by one of the Evangelists, differ in words from what is rehearfed by the other; yet is the fense, in all, one and the same: For every fin is a trespass, either upon God's or our neighbour's right, whereby they are wronged of what is their due; and being fo, we are thereby run into debt by fin, for the duty which should have been paid to either of them; and so to forgive fins, debts, and trespasses, them that trespass against us, our debts, and every one that is indebted to us, are all one thing.

When I explained to you the articles of your christian faith, I shewed you what sin is, and how we became sinners, and were fallen into condemnation for sin: How God, in tenderest compassion, sent his only begotten son to save sinners; how by him a most free and full pardon is offered to all them that unfeignedly repent, and believe the gospel; how in

the church this remission of sins is, by his command, preached unto men, and unto as many of them, as, repenting, submit to the terms of the covenant of grace and reconciliation, sealed and confirmed by the sacraments; whereof you will hear more shortly.

Take notice now, in the first place, that our bleffed Saviour, who knoweth best our needs and present state, in teaching us this prayer, hath taught us to pray as often for the forgiveness of our sins, as for our daily bread; and that is, whenever we pray, or daily at least: Whether then can they be thought to speak by the Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ, who revile and laugh at the church, for teaching men daily to confess, and to beg pardon for their fins; and who are so proudly and pharifaically conceited of their own righteousness, that they confess no fins to God, taking themselves to be perfect, and without fin, and therefore to need no forgiveness? What is that Christ within them, that teacheth them this? It is indeed the Christ who died for sinners at Ferusalem, that teacheth us to pray; but him they own not, and therefore will not be taught by him, but by fomething else within them. Take heed, I beseech you, of hearkening to this fort of people, I mean the Quakers, who would lead you from the merits of your crucified Jesus, to your own righteousness, and a fancy of a Christ within you, for pardon and falvation.

The scripture hath concluded all under sin, Gal. iii. 2. And there is not a just man upon earth that sinneth not, Eccles. vii. 20. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. Rom. iv. 7, 8. It is very true, if we walk in the light, as God is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin, 1 Johni. 7. which certainly is the blood of that Christ, who was crucified without the gate: And this blood so cleanseth us from all sin by way of expiation and atonement,

as to leave that true also, which immediately followeth: If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say, that we have not sinned, we make him a lyar, and his word is not in us, ver. 8, 9, 10. Let us therefore humbly confess and beg pardon for our sins, and believe it to be much safer for us to entertain a very low opinion of our own goodness with the humble publican, than proudly to boast before God our own righteousness with the vain pharisee. Let not the best of us, whenever we come to pray unto God, be ashamed to say, God be merciful to me a sinner, Luke xviii. 13.

But if we hope for mercy and pardon, let us repent, and turn ourselves from our transgressions; so iniquity shall not be our ruin. Let us make us a new beart, and a new spirit; for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn your selves, and live ye, Ezek. xviii. 30, &c. Repent ye therefore of your fins, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, Acts iii. 19. God will not forgive fins wilfully continued in; we must therefore hate all fin, and fhun it all we can, and daily pray for grace to do fo. He that abideth in Christ sinneth not, I John iii. 6. Whosoever is born of God. doth not commit fin; for his feed remaineth in him, and be cannot fin, because be is born of God, ver. 9. These things write I unto you, that ye fin not. By all which is not meant, that a regenerate christian, never thro' human frailty, through ignorance, inadvertency, subreption, or sudden temptation, sinneth at all; but that he generally abstaineth from gross sins, that he strives against all fin, doth not habitually, or wilfully, after sufficient deliberation, venture on any sin; and finding out his fin, doth not continue in it, but hasteth to repent: But for all this, that he may be guilty of many fins of infirmity, for which he ought daily to ask forgiveness, is plain enough from what followeth St. John's dehortation from fin, I John ii. I. If any man fin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: And he hath taught all

christians to repent, and beg pardon.

Again, if we would find mercy and forgiveness with God, we must learn to shew mercy, and to sorgive: This must qualify us for God's pardon, that we be ready to forgive such as offend us. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy, Mat. v. 7. He shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy, Jam. ii. 14. Of this I have said

enough to you before.

Only remember, that when St. Luke faith, Forgive us our fins; FOR we forgive, &c. by this word [For] he meaneth not, that our forgiving others is a fufficient cause or reason, why God should forgive us, or that by it we deserve to be forgiven; but a necessary qualification only, without which we shall not be forgiven: It is one thing which God requireth of us, in order to his forgiving us; and he will not encourage us to hope, that He, the great God whom we have finned against, and who can never stand in need of any forgiveness from us, shall ever forgive us those many talents which we owe him, unless we readily forgive our brethren, whose forgiveness we may possibly some time need, as much as they do ours, those few pence which they can owe unto us, Mat. xviii. 23. Therefore, when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father alfo, which is in beaven, may forgive you your trefpaffes, Mark xi. 25.

O. What's the fixth petition?

A. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Q. What desirest thou in these words?

A. That it will please God to save and defend us in all dangers, ghostly and bodily, and that he will keep

keep us from all fin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.

Q. Are we in danger of being tempted to sin?

A Yes; We ought to confider ourselves, lest we be tempted to sin, Gal. vi. 1. and to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation, Mark xiv. 38.

Q. Doth God tempt any one to fin?

A. No; Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, 7am. i. 13.

Q. When is one tempted, or led into temptation?

A. When he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed, 7 am. i. 14.

Q. Do you pray, that God would not leave you to

your own lusts?

A. Yes; That he would not give us up to our own hearts lusts, to walk in our own counsels, Pfal. lxxxi. 12.

Q. Who is the chief tempter?

A. The devil, or Satan, Mat. iv. 1, 3, 10.

Q. Do you pray for grace to resist him?

- A Yes; That we may be sober and vigilant, refisting him, stedfast in the faith, 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. That we may be able to stand against his wiles, Eph. vi. 11.
- of the pardon of all your fins, whereof you heartily repent; and for grace to repent of them, that you may be forgiven. But this is a very vain petition, if you take not all the care you can, to abstain from fin for the time to come. In this petition therefore you are taught to pray for God's preventing grace, to keep you from falling into sin again; and for his affisting grace, to enable you to resist all temptations to sin, of what fort soever they be. You have heard, how it is the devil's work to tempt men unto sin, as he did our first parents too successfully, and as he did our blessed Saviour himself, but in vain. We

are of ourselves (as you have also heard) very corrupt, and easily tempted, because strongly inclined to sin; and for the love of the world, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the sless, and the pride of life, are apt enough to sin against God. The cunning serpent watcheth to observe and spy out what our inclinations are, and what suits best with our constitution of body, temper of mind, and condition of life, and sits his temptations to every of them, that he may draw us into sin; and if God do not help us, he will certainly prevail over us. We pray therefore unto God for spiritual wisdom and strength, to resist and withstand him.

We pray, I fay, that we may not continue ignorant of Satan's devices, 2 Cor. ii. II. lest he gain too great an advantage against us by our ignorance: for into what pit may not one lead him that is blind? That we may not, by any passion or evil affection, give place to the devil, Epb. iv. 27. open the door to him, and entertain him within. That we may not through the love of riches, (or any other thing) fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, I Tim. vi. 9. That in time of temptation (or perfecution) we may not fall away, Luke viii. 13. That we may not be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from our stedfastness, 2 Pet. iii. 15. That we may beware, left any one spoil us through philosophy, and vain deceit, Col. ii. 8. or beguile us with enticing words, ver. 4. That we may give no heed to feducing spirits, I Tim. iv. 1. That we may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and put on the whole armour of God, and be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, Eph. vi. 10, 11. Thus are we to pray against the evil of fin; for if we be not drawn into that, we shall escape the evil of punishment, especially everlasting death.

This one thing I very heartily beg of you all, that whilst you thus pray, you would not give your-selves the lye; I mean, that you would not wilfully and needlessly run into the midst of temptations, and even provoke and dare the devil to tempt you. Now this you do, when either you spend your time in idleness, and have no good business to employ your-selves in, this is the devil's feed-time; or when you frequent the bad company of such as have enslaved themselves to the devil, and are his tools for the tempting others, and drawing them into sin and wickedness.

We have now explained unto you the fix petitions of the Lord's prayer, and proceed to the conclusion of it.

Q. What is the conclusion of the Lord's prayer?

A. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Q. What mean you by these words, For thine is the

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A. I bless the Most High, and I praise and honour him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation, Dan. iv. 34.

Q. What signify these words, And the power

A. I acknowledge that God ruleth by his power for ever, Pfal. lxvi. 7. To whom be honour and power everlasting, 1 Tim. vi. 16.

Q. What do these words signify, And the glory?

A. I desire, that unto God may be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen, Eph. iii. 21.

Q. What meaneth this word, Amen?

A. I trust God will do for us all that we here pray for, as Christ hath taught us, of his mercy and goodness, through Jesus Christ. And therefore 1 say, Amen; that is, so be it.

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§. The honour and glory of almighty God, ought to be always before our eyes, as that which we principally aim at in all that we do: It is to be the first and last thing in our defires, designs, endeavours, As therefore we are taught, by our and prayers. holy Jesus, to express our desires of honouring God in the beginning of our prayers, not only by calling, and with all humility of foul and body, adoring him as our heavenly Father, to whom we owe our being, and all other things; but also by praying in the first place to him, as the fountain of all grace and goodness, and of all the power that is in any to serve, honour, and obey him, that he may have the honour due unto his name given him by all the world, that his dominion may be owned and submitted to, and all his laws most willingly obeyed; so after all the petitions which we offer up for ourselves or other men, we are taught to make this confession of praise unto the great and glorious God: Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

In this we follow the example of fuch good men as had, without all question, and were guided by the Holy Spirit of God. Thus faid David, Bleffed be the Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord; and thou art exalted as Head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name, I Chron. xxix. 11, &c. And thus the holy apostles frequently, Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen, Rom. xi. 36. To bim be glory, and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen, 1 Pet. v. 11. To the only wife God, our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now and

and ever Amen, Jude 25. Thus the holy angels in heaven, faying, Amen, Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and bonour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen, Rev. vii. 12. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and bonour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb, for

ever and ever, Rev. v. 13.

Neither are these words only a form of praising God, or of doxology; that is, of ascribing of glory to God; but they contain the best argument to perfuade and encourage us to pray, and to trust in God, that he will hear us, and grant our requests, even for the glory of his kingdom and power. We declare in these words, that we glory in the Lord only, as it is our duty to do, I Cor. i. 31, and in that we are the subjects of his kingdom, and under the reins of his power. That we glory in his name, and that our hearts rejoice when we feek the Lord, I Chron. xvi. 10. and that we defire always to glory in his praife, ver. 35. Let bim (faith God) that glorieth, glory in this; that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, faith the Lord, Jer. ix. 24. In this holy confidence, and trust, and rejoicing in the loving kindness of our Father, the Lord of all things, the King of angels and men, and the Almighty God, we are taught to fay, Amen.

And that is as much as to fay, All these things, O gracious Father, we most earnestly beg, and servently desire, that thou, by thine almighty power, and for thy glory, wilt grant to us thy creatures, and humble subjects and servants: So be it, good Lord, we most humbly beseech thee. And seeing that thine only begotten Son, our blessed Saviour, hath taught us thus to pray, we do not at all doubt, but sirmly

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believe,

believe, that what we have asked, is according to thy will; and that being in thy power, and tending to thy glory, it shall be granted unto us, through the merits and mediation of our blessed Jesus making intercession for us: Therefore we say, Amen, so be it.

You have now been taught to give a good account, how you understand the articles of your belief, which you promised in your baptism to believe; and the commandments of God, which you then promised to keep; and the Lord's prayer, wherein you beg God's help and grace, that you may be willing and able both to believe, and to do as you have promised.

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Make it therefore your daily business thus to pray, and lose not God's help and bleffing for want of asking it, as you have been taught by him who came into the world on purpose to bless and save you, and who hath given you the best assurance in the world, that you shall speed well by praying the Father in his name: Yea, and more yet, that he might fufficiently provide for all our infirmities, and to make us the greatest assurance that we can defire, that if we fincerely endeavour to make good what we are obliged to perform on our part, though it be with much weakness, and very imperfectly, God of his infinite mercy, and for his beloved Son's fake, will never fail us in doing his part in the new covenant of grace, but will bestow upon us whatever he hath promised; he hath, besides his word, and prayer, appointed other ordinances, as means of grace to be observed in his church, called facraments; the nature, use, and benefit whereof you are next to learn.

Q. How many sacraments bath Christ ordained in bis church?

A. Two only, as generally necessary to falvation; that is to say, baptism, and the supper of the Lord.

Q. What meanest thou by this word sacrament?

A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an in-

A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Q. How many parts are there in a facrament?

A. Two, the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

In these three questions and answers, you are taught these things concerning sacraments in general. First, What it is that is called a sacrament: Secondly, What are the parts of every sacrament: Thirdly,

How many facraments there be in the church.

First, in the second question, you are asked, what you mean by this word facrament; because, till this be known, you cannot tell, either what parts there be of a facrament, or how many facraments there be. And when you are asked, what you mean by this word facrament, you are not asked, what this word fignifieth in the holy scripture; for it is granted, that there is no fuch word to be found there; only there be certain ordinances, which the scripture telleth us Christ did appoint to be used in the church, which the church, to distinguish them from other ordinances, calleth facraments: So that the meaning of this question is this; What are those ordinances of Christ, which the church calleth facraments, and what things understandeth the church by that name? This word is indeed a Latin word; yet need not you, to answer this question, be fent to inquire how many things this word is used to signify in Latin authors; neither what is the most proper signification of it, as a Latin word. All that you are concerned to know of it is, in what sense we christians, or the church of Christ, ordinarily use this word.

And to this question you are well taught to answer in these words; I mean [by the word sacrament, as the church useth it, and gives it for a common name to some special ordinances of Christ] an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace, &c.

The words of which answer I shall shortly explain

unto you.

The word facrament, fignifies nothing else but a facred, solemn, religious action, rite or ceremony: And here it signifies, by the consent of the christian church, some particular actions, which our blessed Saviour hath commanded to be very solemnly and religiously performed by the church, for the sealing, confirming, and renewing of the new covenant, made between our offended God, and us sinners, through his mediation.

Such is the wonderful condescension of our gracious Father, that in confideration of our present Pate, and because we dwell in flesh, and are encompassed on every side with worldly things, which by our bodily senses affect our minds, and mightily diffurb our contemplations of spiritual things; and therefore we stand in need of all the helps we can find, to confirm our faith in his promises of unseen things, and to keep us stedfast in our own promises of a spiritual aud heavenly life, to be led in his fear and love, and in his presence; our merciful Jesus, instead of those numerous, obscure, and burdensome ceremonies, whereunto the Jews were obliged, hath inflituted and commanded two only, very clear in their fignification, and very easy to be used, for the more folemn entering into, commemorating, renewing, and confirming of this gracious covenant; even as it hath always been a custom among all people, to use in covenanting some fort of ceremonies, as outward tokens of their fincerity, and to imprint in their minds a deeper sense of the obligation they took upon themselves.

Here then you learn what the church means by a facrament: That is, a religious action commanded by Christ, wherein there is an outward visible sign made use of. And the use of a sign being to signify some other thing, there is in every sacrament, a thing signified by the outward visible sign; and the thing

fignified

fignified by the outward visible sign in a sacrament, is an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us of God in the covenant. Again, this outward visible sign, is not any thing, which either by its nature may seem sit, or by men may be made choice of for this use of signifying the spiritual grace; but it must be a thing instituted and appointed by Christ himself for that use. And then, lastly, it is not only a naked sign of the grace given, but also a means whereby we receive the same; that is, the spiritual grace signified by it; and also a pledge, and earnest, to assure us of it.

Whatever therefore some men have called sacraments, in a larger sense, using the word for many sorts, or sometimes, it may be, for any kind of sacred action or ceremony; this only is that which the church doth emphatically, and distinguishingly from other things, call a Sacrament. And whatever wants any of the things here mentioned in your answer, that is, what hath not an outward and visible sign, and that sign ordained by Christ himself, and ordained to be a means of receiving, and a pledge to assure us of some inward spiritual grace given or promised by God, is no sacrament in the sense of the christian church.

And now, by this which hath been said, you may easily see the truth of the answer, which you are taught to give unto the third question, concerning the number of parts in a sacrament; for these must needs be two, the outward visible thing which Christ hath appointed for the sign, and the inward spiritual grace which it is ordained to signify: The latter being invisible, is represented to us by the former, which is visible.

And this is enough also to help you to give a true answer to the first question about the number of sacraments ordained by Christ. Whereunto you are taught to answer thus, Two only, as generally necessary to salvation, baptism, and the supper of the Lord:

Lord; where these things are affirmed by you: First, That baptism, and the supper of the Lord. are facraments, and this will, I hope, be made very plain to you, when speaking of them severally, I shall shew you, that they want none of those things which are requifite in a facrament. Secondly, That they are generally necessary to talvation. And this will also appear, when we shew, that they are commanded to all men by our Saviour, the wilful violation of whose commands excludes men from salvation by him: I fay, wilful; for it is not the bare want of these facraments, where they are not to be had, or where we cannot be allowed them, without joining with others in a known fin; but the wilful neglect, or contempt of them, which is damnable. Thirdly, That there be no more fuch facraments, but these two only: No other, that are generally neceffary to falvation.

The church of Rome hath, besides these two, five more sacraments, as they call them: that is, penance, matrimony, confirmation, ordination, and extreme unction. But the some of these, and many other things, may in some sense be called sacraments, that is, sacred actions; yet they are none of them sacraments, in the sense of the catholick church of Christ; they are all such as either want some of the requisites of a sacrament, or are not generally necessary to salvation. If they have all that is requisite to make a sacrament generally necessary to salvation, let them shew us it, and we will own them as well as these two, which they, as well as we, grant to be proper

facraments.

This is as much as is needful for us to know of facraments in general, and to make you understand the church's notion of a facrament.

Q. Which is the first christian sacrament?

Q. What is the outward visible fign or form in baptism?

A. Water,

A. Water, wherein the person is baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Q. Did Christ himself ordain this outward visible

sign in baptism?

A. Yes; He commanded his apostles to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Mat. xxviii. 19.

Q. Did the apostles and others, in obedience to this

command, baptize in water?

A. Yes, they did, Acts viii. 36. x. 47.

Q. Is baptism necessary generally to salvation?

A. Yes; He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be faved, Mark xvi. 16.

Q. Can the washing, or sprinkling with water save

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- A. Baptism saveth us, not the putting away the filth of the slesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21.
- 6. Here you fee, that it was the command of Christ, that they who, by the preaching of the apostles, were converted to the faith, should be baptized, or admitted to be members of his church by the ceremony of baptism; and that he himself ordained the outward visible sign in baptism, which is water, the element wherewith they are to be baptized, that is, washed.

We have two forts of people among us at this day, and they are grown very numerous, who deny that our bleffed Saviour did inftitute any fuch thing, as what they call in contempt, water-baptism. They grant, that he commanded his apostles to baptize; but say, he commanded them not to baptize with water. These deriders of water-baptism, are the Socinians, who deny the godhead of Jesus Christ; and the Quakers, who have learned of them, and use their arguments. I do very heartily beg of you all,

all, as you love Jesus Christ, and your own souls, that you would never hearken to either of these two sorts of men, who'e poison hath corrupted too many, whom they have seduced into very many dangerous errors.

Whereas they fay, that water is not named in the command to baptize, Mat. xxviii. 19. tell them that there was no need of its being named; and that, because, 1st, it is implied in the word baptizing; which word fignifieth, where-ever it is not figuratively used. a washing, or rincing with water. If then it be in this text used in its proper fignification, here is a command to baptize with water, tho' water be not named; and if it be faid, that it is used figuratively, they that fay fo, ought to prove what they fay, before you believe them. Beloved, believe not every (pirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world, I John iv. I. 2dly, Tell them, that before Christ gave this command, it is well known, that it was the custom both of Jews and Gentiles, to enter persons into the profession of their religion by baptizing, or washing them in water. 3dly, That according to this custom, John the Baptist baptized his disciples with water, and hence had he the title of Baptift. 4thly, That Jesus himself was, before this command given, baptized by John in water, and so had some of his apostles been, to whom the command was 5thly, That the disciples of Christ before his passion, and therefore before this command, which was given after his refurrection, did baptize with water, and that by his commission. The Fews were baptized of John in Jordan, Mat. iii. 6. I (faith he) baptize with water, ver. 11. Jesus came from Galilee to Fordan unto John, to be baptized of him, ver. 13. And when he was baptized, went up ftraightway out of the water, ver. 16. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there be tarried

Hence you learn, first, that the way of initiating or admitting disciples, used both by John the baptist, and our bleffed Saviour in Judea, was this of baptizing, or washing with water; and next, that baptizing with water was approved of God, before Christ gave this command, tho' taken up by the Jews, for aught we know, and grown into a custom, without any command of God before. Our Saviour asked the Pharisees, Whence the baptism of John was? From heaven or of men? Mat. xxi. 25. Intimating by this question, that it was from heaven. Hence also 'tis faid, Luke vii. 29, 30. The people justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John; but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. Yea, Jobn himself affirms, that God sent him to baptize with water, Luke iii. 3, 4. And as for our Saviour, how is it true, that he baptized, and yet that he baptized not, but his disciples, but thus only, That he baptized by them? And how again could he be faid to baptize by them, but because what they did, was by his authority and commission?

It is true, that being sent as yet to preach to none but to the lost sheep of the house of I/rael, we read not yet of their baptizing any-where but in Judea; and there they baptized with water, and that by commission from Christ, seeing what they did, he is said to do. But now after the resurrection of Christ, he being shortly to ascend into heaven, and to send thence upon them the holy Ghost to enable them by the gift of speaking in all languages, and working miracles, to preach to all nations; he inlargeth their commission to baptize in all nations such as believed, even as before they had done the Jews. Laying all this together, they must needs have a very great stock

stock of impudence, that can deny that baptizing

with water was commanded by our Saviour.

Nay, how could the apostles understand our Lord's command in any other fense but this? For knowing this to have been an antient custom among both Tews and Gentiles; and that John had by divine authority made use of it; that Jesus himself was so baptized; and that they had by his commission thus baptized their Fewish converts; if he meant not in this new commission the same kind of baptism, had it not been necessary for him to have told them what other he meant, left they should through mistake use water-baptism still, as before they had done? And that they understood him of that and no other, appears by their practice afterwards, They that believed Philip were baptized, both men and women, Acts viii. 12. And how was that, but as the eunuch was baptized by him, that is, with water? See (faith the eunuch) here is water, what hindereth me to be baptized? ver. 36. And they both went down into the water, and he baptized him, ver. 38. Can any one forbid water (faith St. Peter) that thefe should not be baptized? Acts x. 47. It feems Peter knew not how they should be baptized without water. And shall we believe that Socinians and Quakers are wifer than that great apostle?

But what did Christ mean by baptizing, if not baptizing with water? He meant (say some of them) teaching, not washing with water. Now this wants proof, that baptizing signifieth teaching, which it nowhere doth. And if it should so signify in Christ's command, it seems somewhat hard to make good sense of these words, Go teach all nations, teaching them in the name, &c. and teach them to observe, &c. And why must baptizing be set for teaching, more in the second place than in the first or third if all be but teaching? How easy is the seuse of the words, on our side? Go, saith Christ, first persuade men to be my disciples by teaching them a summary of the christian saith; if they consent and believe, baptize

or wash them with water in the name, &c. Let them be entered by this ceremony, and then teach them more perfectly their christian duty. Others fav. Christ's command was to baptize with the Holy Ghost: But this wants proof too. Christ indeed promised the apostles, that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost, Acts i. 4. And John said of Christ, that he should baptize with the Holy Ghost, Mat. iii. 11. But where is it faid, that the apostles, or any other, should so baptize? And if it were, as it is not, might they not baptize with water also? Indeed men baptize with water only, and it is Christ alone that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. Nay, they that had already received the Holy Ghost, were nevertheless to be baptized with water. Can any man, saith St. Peter, furbid water, that thefe should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized, Acts x. 47, 48. Had there then been any fuch things as Quakers amongst those people, what a stir would they have made with the apostle for this? They would certainly have forbidden water, which none then that had the Spirit durst do.

After all this they fay, 'tis plain that Christ commanded not water-baptifm, because St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 17. Christ sent me not to haptize, but to . preach the gospel. Now suppose, that these words were to be understood as they would have them, that St. Paul had no commission to baptize, but only to preach; must it thence follow that none of the apostles received any such commission? But ask them in good earnest, Had St. Paul authority from Christ to baptize, or no? If he had not, then went he beyond his commission and authority, when he baptized Crispus, and Gaius, and the houshold of Stephanus, and whether any other is not certain, ver. 14, 16. If he had authority to baptize, his words can fignify no more but this, that Christ had not made baptism, but preaching, his principal work; which so fully employed him, that he had little time to baptize in; he left it therefore unto others, who might do it more conveniently than he then could.

And this I think enough to teach you now concerning the outward fign of washing with water, and to arm you competently against both Socinians

and their scholars the Quakers.

You have faid, that the person is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the the Holy Ghost; that is, in the name of the ever bleffed and most glorious Trinity, three Persons, but one God, bleffed for ever. Whereby you are to understand, that as the minister doth baptize by the authority of God, and by virtue of Christ's command; and by this holy ceremony instituted by Christ, doth admit persons into the church, and covenant of grace; so the persons thus baptized, are thereby dedicated unto, and bound to continue in the true faith, worship, and service of this one God and three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Remember therefore this, That in your baptism you were most folemnly devoted and dedicated to the faith, worship and service of the holy Trinity; and if you fall off from this faith, and religious worshipping of the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, you are covenant-breakers and apostates, and deferve not any longer to bear the name of christians.

Having told me what is the outward fign in bap-

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tism, tell me now,

Q. What is the inward spiritual grace? A. A death unto fin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in fin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

6. Observe, I pray, what here in this answer you affirm: First, That by nature you are born in fin. Secondly, That because of sin, you were the children Thirdly, That the inward grace, or thing fignified fignissed in baptism is, 1st, A death unto sin: 2dly, A new birth unto righteousness. Fourthly, That by baptism you are made the children of grace.

The two first things which you here affirm, viz. 1. That you are by nature born in sin, and, 2dly, The children of wrath, or such as deserve the punishment due to sinners, have been already sufficiently taught

you.

You have also been taught, that after man was fallen into this wretched state of sin and death; God of his infinite goodness, and tender compassion, was pleased to promise, that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head, which had tempted man into sin, and got the power over him, and so deliver mankind out of that wretched state whereinto he had brought him: That this seed is Jesus Christ, who was made the Mediator of a new covenant, called the covenant of grace, because it contains the terms of reconciliation on which we may for Christ's sake be restored unto God's savour, wherein our safety and happiness doth consist.

And now you are to know, that baptism is a seal of this new covenant, or that solemn ceremony which Christ hath ordained to be used at our first entering into it, and whereby God sealeth his part unto us,

and we again our part unto him.

It is (as our church declareth in the xxviith article of religion) not only a fign of our profession, and a mark of difference, whereby christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but it is also a fign of regeneration, or new birth; whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly, are grafted into the church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God, by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed unto us, faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

They then that receive baptism rightly, die unto fin, that is, they are daily more and more cleansed from

from the pollution of it, mortify it more and more, and cease from committing of it: And they are new-born unto righteousness, that is, they change by the power of God's Holy Spirit, which is a principle of new and spiritual life to them, their unholy and carnal minds into holy and spiritual, and have a new power bestowed upon them to perform what God requireth of them, that they may be saved by Christ.

Q. Are all sincere christians dead unto sin?

A. Yes; We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, Rom. vi. 4. and must reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, ver. 11.

O. Are they also new-born unto righteousness?

A. Yes; In baptism we are risen with Christ, Col. ii. 12. and must reckon ourselves alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 11.

Q. Is it necessary for us to be thus regenerate or

new-born?

A. Yes; Except a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John iii. 5

Q. Are we in baptism made members of Christ?

A. Yes; By one Spirit we are baptized into one body, the church, which is the body of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Epb. i. 22, 23.

Q. Are you therein made the children of God?

A Yes; We are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 26, 27.

Q. Are you also made inheritors of the kingdom of

beaven?

A. Yes; For if we be children, then are we heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, Rom. viii.

6. We must have life in us, before we can perform the actions of life; and therefore we being dead

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in trespasses and sins, must be quickened by the Spirit of life, before we can perform the actions of the spiritual and christian life, Eph. ii. 1. And hence regeneration, or a being born again of God, is altogether necessary, seeing that which is born of slesh is but slesh, as you have heard before, and cannot perform spiritual derivations.

form spiritual duties,

Now by baptism, as it is a covenanting rite or ceremony, we do most solemnly oblige ourselves, and God doth require it of us fo to do, to die daily unto fin, and to mortify it in ourselves, and to live unto God, and to do the duties of christians. yet this is a thing which (as you are taught in this cas techism) we cannot do of ourselves, it is above our natural strength; and how then can we thus folemnly promise and bind ourselves to do, what of ourselves we have no power at all to do? The new covenant is called, as you have heard, the covenant of grace, not only because it was the free grace and favour of God to grant it unto us, he having no motive at all, but his own pure goodness, and tender pity to invite him fo to do; but also because he hath therein most graciously condescended to our weakness, and hath made us most favourable terms and conditions of pardon and falvation through Jesus Christ. For in this covenant God alloweth of repentance after fin, and; affureth all, that unfeignedly repent, of a full pardon. how many, or how great foever their fins have been He therefore requireth not of us a perfect, and finless obedience, or to obey so, as that we may be justified in his fight by our own righteousness, so that he can find in us, when he entereth into judgment with us, no fin at all to lay to our charge; but will accept of a fincere and hearty obedience, tho' many ways imperfect and unworthy of his acceptance; and laftly, our faith in Christ Jesus, working in us love, and by love a fincere obedience, shall be imputed to us for righteoufness; that is, shall qualify is no less for his favour and gracious acceptance, Cc 2

388 The Scripture Catechift; or, than the most perfect righteousness without all sin

would have done.

But after all this, to what end is this covenant made with us, if we have no power to do what it obligeth us to? And how is it a covenant of grace or favour, so long as the conditions on our part are fuch as exceed our strength, and we cannot perform them? Before we are capable of receiving baptism, as you will see anon, we must believe in Christ and his gospel, and be stedfastly resolved both to forfake our fins, and to live holy and christian lives; what then is that spiritual grace of baptism, therein said to be received by us, and sealed unto us? Repentance, faith, and new obedience are the fruit of the Spirit; and we must repent and believe, before we be baptized; and therefore must have the Spirit also, whose fruit these are, before baptism. This seems to make it very hard to understand what the inward grace in baptism should fignify. Yet you are greatly concerned to be well instructed herein, that you may not look on your baptism as an empty sign of being a christian, or an infignificant ceremony. And that you may understand this facrament, and the virtue of it aright, hearken diligently to what I now tell you in short, because I must say more of it anon.

First then, The mercy of God overtakes us in our state of sin and misery, and he causeth the gospel of Christ to be preached unto us, to invite us to return from our sins unto him, whom we shall find very ready to pardon us, and to bring us by the grace of his Holy Spirit to eternal life, if we accept of him whom he hath sent to save us, Jesus Christ; and believing him to be our Saviour, submit ourselves to

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be taught and governed by him.

Secondly, God for Christ's sake having thus outwardly called us by the voice of the gospel, doth also by the secret operation of his Holy Spirit make the whole doctrine thereof pleasing, and the arguments of its truth convincing, so that we verily believe lieve the gospel to be the very word of God, and Jesus Christ, who is preached unto us, to be the only Saviour of sinners; and the same Holy Spirit persuadeth and inclineth us effectually to accept of him on the terms he offereth himself unto us, and to leave our former course of life to be his disciples.

Thirdly, When it is come to this, and we are by the preventing grace of God's Holy Spirit brought to the knowledge of the gospel of Christ, and moved to accept of him for our Saviour; it is his will, that we should openly declare and testify this by the solemnity of baptism, or being washed with water as aforesaid; and so a covenant is sealed and compleated thereby, and a spiritual grace assured, and made over unto us therein.

Fourtbly, This spiritual grace is not the repentance. faith, and purpose of obedience, which we had before; but it is a new principle of spiritual life, and a power and strength of making good our resolutions, and keeping our promifes and vows, and of dying continually to fin, and living unto God; which power we had not by nature, and yet without which, it would be in vain for us to enter into this new covenant, the conditions whereof we could never hope And it cannot be imagined, that God would call upon us to do it, knowing it in vain for us ever to think of performing our part therein, which he hath laid upon us, without the strength of Christ's Holy Spirit, and an ability supernatural bestowed upon us, did he not hereby bestow it upon us.

That this is so, and that baptism is the means and instrument of our receiving this power, seems plain from what we read in the holy scripture. Our bleffed Saviour in his discourse with Nicodemus, John iii. telleth of a necessity of one's being born again, or being a new creature, having the corrupt dispositions of his heart changed, in order to his entring into the kingdom of heaven. He telleth him, that if he

would fee the kingdom of God, he must be born again of water, or must be baptized, (for the Tews were wont to account of the proselytes or converts whom they had baptized, as of persons born again) and of the Holy Ghost, or by him cleansed from worldly and carnal lufts, and conformed in affection and conversation to the holy rules of the gospel; so as not to be henceforward flesh, or a mere carnal man, but spirit, freed from the dominion of his lusts. ver. iv. 6. that he may be able to die to fin, and to live unto righteoufness, as from Rom. vi. you have learned. It is the Spirit, that enableth us henceforward to apply unto ourselves the crucifying of Christ for the destroying of the body of fin which is in us. that henceforth we may not ferve fin, ver. 6. thus are we circumcised in Christ, with the circumcision made without bands, in putting off the body of the fins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, Col. ii. 11. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him. through the faith of the operation of God, who bath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your fins, and the uncircumcifion of your flesh, bath be quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ver. 12, 13.

If you shall now ask, How it cometh to pass, that very many of them who have been baptized, if they receive this principle of life and power (as I here suppose they do) in baptism, should afterwards all their days live so unanswerably to their baptismal vows, as it is too notorious that they do? You are to remember, that baptism is no more but an initiateing sacrament, whereby they enter into a covenant, whereunto there must be a full consent of both parties; and this being granted, the unchristian lives of persons baptized, hinder not, but that all baptized persons either do, or may receive therein, that spiritual power whereof we speak. For, First, If they who come to baptism be not duly disposed and prepared for it, they receive nothing there-

in, but the outward fign, and that to their greater condemnation because of their hypocrify. And Secondly, Though they come to it duly qualified for it; yet what they herein receive is only a spiritual power, to continue good christians to their lives end : and fuch a power takes not away their powers of doing evil, or of falling off from the christian religion. It makes it not impossible for them to break their covenant, but possible to keep it, if they apply their minds to it, and make use of such helps as are needful to that end. The giving of this power is only an initial work of God's Spirit, enabling us at present to do our present duty, and giving us assurance of more strength upon the performance of certain conditions. which tho' before of ourselves we had no power to perform, yet now we have; and therefore, if we perform them not, our guilt is the greater, and fo also shall our condemnation be.

You told me in the beginning of your catechism, that in baptism you were made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. This is your encouragement to be a christian; for certainly no greater things can you desire

for yourfelf, than these amount to.

By a member of Christ, you are to understand a member of the church of Christ, or of that holy fociety and body of christians, whereof Christ himfelf is the head, as hath been taught you. wonderful great privileges you therein enjoy, or may enjoy, if you be not your own enemy. Herein you have the benefit of divine instruction, and of all Christ's holy ordinances; and in a word, you have all the means of grace and falvation duly administred to you. But you must be sure to remember this, that the visible church, or body of christian professors, is like a field wherein wheat and tares grow up together until the harvest, Mat. xiii. 24. It is like a net, wherein are fish both good and bad, ver. 47. You may continue a member of this visible church, Cc4

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and vet be no member of the invisible church of Christ, the body of sincere christians, certainly known to none, but God and themselves. These only are the living members of Christ, which all who have been baptized are not. They all indeed do folemnly covenant to be fo, and are by the preaching of the gospel called to be so; but many there be that obey not this call, many prove unfound and unfruitful members, and grow very corrupt both in their principles and practices; and these are all dead or dving mem-The fervants fent forth to call, gathered together both good and bad to the wedding, Mat. xxii. Yet tho' many are called, few are chosen, ver. I am the vine, (faith Christ) and we are the branches, John xv. 5. But now observe, though all baptized christians, till they fall off by separation, or are justly cut off by the censures of the church for their fins or errors, are called members and branches, yet every branch that beareth not fruit, God taketh away, ver. 2. If a man abide not in me, (faith Christ) that is, so as to live and bear fruit, be is cast forth and withered, cast into the fire and burned, ver. 6. It concerns you therefore to be living members of the invisible church, as you have a power given you to be in baptism.

And if you be so, you are the children of God, and that is an inestimable privilege. For though God be very just and good to all men, yet be sure of it, he hath always a more especial kindness for his children. Of such God saith, I will spare them, even as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, Mal. iii. 17. God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, Eph. i. 3,

Yet here remember again, that tho' all baptize, persons are the children of God by a covenant-relation and adoption; yet they are not all so by a spiritual regeneration. Adoption is the taking of an stranger into the relation of a child, and affuring him of a child's portion, with all the privileges of a child lawfully begotten. Tho' we were made by God. and ought to behave ourselves towards him as dutifulchildren, with all filial reverence, love and obedience: yet in a short time the whole world revolted from their obedience to him, unto the worship of idols. Out of these notwithstanding, God was resolved to take for himself a church and peculiar people; and he made choice of Abraham for the father of them: and by a covenant made with him and his feed. adopted them his children. Hence are the Israelites. or posterity of Abraham, called the children of God. Deut. xiv. I. And to them (faith the apostle) belonged the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants. Rom. ix. 4. But they rejecting Jesus Christ, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, in whom alone God did predestinate men unto the adoption of children to himself, Eph. i. 5. the apostles were fent by Christ unto the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46, 47. And as many as received, that is, believed on Jesus Christ, whom they preached unto them as the Saviour of finners, to them gave he power, or the privilege of being the sons, or children of God, John i. 12.

By baptism this their adoption, by the way of covenanting, is sealed unto all believers. We hereby, I say, are taken into the near relation of children, and to be used as children, and are all holy unto the Lord, not all of us by an inward or inherent holiness, but by a sederal or covenant-holiness, not all inwardly sanctified, but sacramentally consecrated to God; by this sacrament we have bound ourselves to live holy lives, as the children of the most holy God, and have received power to do so, and assurance from God, that he will own and bless us

whilst

whilst we do fo. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. vi. 18. Yet is it on this condition. ver. 17. that we be separate, and come out from the idolatrous and wicked ways of finners, and touch not the unclean thing; fo, and not otherwise, God will receive us. God fent forth his Son --- that we might receive the adoption of fons, Gal. iv. 4, 5. We therefore forfeit this inestimable privilege of believers, if we live not as they who are born of God, and do deliberately and habitually commit fin. I John iii. 9. He that committeb fin is of the devil. ver. 8. If we put not on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true boliness, being renewed in the spirit of our mind, Eph. iv. 23, 24. we lose the benefit of our adoption and baptism. Only as many as are led by the Spirit of God. are the fons of God, Rom. viii. 14.

And hereby you may eafily understand, how you are in baptism made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; that is, of the glorious state of saints and angels in perfect and endless blessedness with God in As many as have entered into covenant with God by baptism, have a fure right and title, but still on certain conditions to be performed by them, made over to them by God, and fo are heirs of falvation, Heb. i. 14. They have not only a general hope of fome good thing, they know not certainly what, from God's goodness and merciful nature; but by the free grant of God through Christ Jesus, they have a fair and legal claim to a certain inheritance affured and fealed unto them on the terms of the new covenant in baptism. This then must be your special care, to see that you lose not your title to this glorious inheritance, by neglecting to do your part, which you by this covenant are bound to do.

Q. What is required of persons to be baptized?

A. Repentance, whereby they forfake fin; and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.

Q. Where find you, that repentance is required of

them that are to be baptized?

A. St. Peter biddeth those whom he had converted, repent, and be baptized, Acts ii. 38.

Q. Where find you faith required?

A. Philip told the eunuch, that if he believed with all his heart, he might be baptized, Acts viii.

Q. Is repentance a forfaking of fin?

A. Yes; A turning from our fins unto the Lord, amending our ways and our doings, Ezek. xviii. 28, 30. I/a. lv. 7. Fer. vii. 3.

Q. What is the promise made to us in this sa-

crament?

A. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be faved, Mark xvi. 16.

In the sound are taught, that repentance and faith are both of them necessary to qualify persons for baptism. But you are to understand this to be spoken of such persons only as are adult, that is, as are of age, and such a ripeness of understanding, as to know what they do, and to be able to act for themselves. Such only can be convinced by the preaching of the gospel, as can understand what is preached; and they only can repent and believe, and to them it is necessary to do so, before they offer themselves to baptism.

When John the baptist came to baptize, he first prepared his hearers for it, by preaching repentance, Mat. iii. 1, 2. And they that came to be baptized of him confessed their sins, ver. 6. And when the Pharisees came to be baptized of him, he thus checked them; O generation of vipers, who bath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, ver. 7, 8.

And

And as he called for repentance in persons coming to his baptism, so called he for faith also; saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ, Acts xix. 4. And the design of his coming was to call men unto faith in Christ. He came for a witness. to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe, John i. 7. And thus (as was faid) St. Peter called on them whom he baptized, to repent, Acts ii. And Philip, to believe, Acts viii. And there, ver. 12. 'tis faid, When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God. and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. I will fay no more of this now, because I shall presently have occasion again to speak of it.

Q. Why then are infants baptized, when by reason

of their tender age they cannot perform them?

A. Because they promise them both by their fureties, which promife, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

Q. Who are their Sureties?

A. The same whom before I called godfathers and godmothers.

Q. Did you then promise by them, what they pro-

mised in your name?

A. Yes; I did.

Q. What then did you promise by them?

A. The fame three things, which I faid before, they did promise and vow in my name.

6. Here are a great many things to be learned by you concerning baptism, and I will endeavour to teach you them in fuch order, as I hope you may very easily understand them.

I will begin with the things, which you faid you promifed and vowed by your fureties. Two whereof were, 1. That you should believe all the articles of the christian faith; and, 2dly, That you shuold keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your life. I have already said as much as is needful for your understanding of both these two things which you promised and vowed. Yet I will here mind you of a

few things concerning them.

The first is this, That tho' it be enough to prepare persons of age for the receiving of baptism, that they believe all the articles of the christian faith. which I have explained unto you, to be true; and that they are persuaded, and resolved by baptism to enter into covenant, to be the disciples of Christ; this faith being it that qualified the eunuch for baptism, I believe (saith he) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Acts viii. 37. And St. Peter taught Cornelius to believe, that he is Lord of all, and that through his name, who soever believeth in him, shall receive remission of fins, Acts x. 36, 43. And Acts xviii. 5. Paul testified to the Jews, That Jesus was Christ: And, ver. 8. Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized: Tho' this fort of faith, I fay, be enough to prepare adult persons for baptism, yet in the faith which qualifieth for receiving the bleffings of the covenant fealed in baptism, a great deal more is implied, than the bare believing of the truth. That must be a lively, and operative faith, purifying the heart, Acts xv. 9. Working by love, Gal. vi. 6. Overcoming the world, I John v. 4. Quenching all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. vi. 16. And bringing us (as it did faithful Abraham) to an absolute refignation unto God, and an universal obedience to his will. It is a trufting of God with all our concerns temporal and eternal, whilst we make it our chief care to ferve him according to the rules of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Again,

Again, It must be such a faith, as excludes all trusting and relying on the worth or virtue of our own righteousness, to what degrees of perfection so ever, through the grace of God, we have attained; yea, though it were the doing of all that is commanded us, as far as we can find; and whereby we rely on nothing for the acceptance of all we do, and the justification of ourpersons, but only on God's free

mercy through the merits of Jesus Christ.

And lastly, We are so to believe every article, as to believe with it every thing that by the holy scripture appeareth to be contained in that article. Thus we are not only to believe, that Christ suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, which is all true, and expressly affirmed in the creed; but we are to believe, that he suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried for us sinners, a sacrifice of atonement, and an expiation for sins; because we read, That he was delivered for our offences, Rom. iv. 25. That he is the propitiation for our sins, I John ii. 2. That he was once offered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, I Pet. iii. 18. That he his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, I Pet. ii. 24, &c.

Our faith then must be neither the Antinomians faith, that is, a believing, that Jesus Christ hath by his death so satisfied God's justice for us, that we have nothing at all to do on our part, but to believe that he hath done all for us already; neither the Socinians faith, that is, a believing that Christ died only to give us an example of patient suffering, to confirm unto us the truth of his holy doctrine, that we may the more readily believe it, to persuade us to do our duty, and to draw us off from sin; but not that he made any satisfaction for us, on which, doing our duty as well as we can, we may rely for

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Secondly, Concerning your promise to keep God's holy will and commandments, let me briefly mind you of these things:

1. That the obedience you have promised must be hearty and sincere, tho' not perfect. It must be without hypocrify and dissimulation, tho' not

without all fin, or finful infirmity.

2. It must be with a real intention of honouring and pleasing God, and not under a pretence of serving God, only to enjoy our own humours, and to

promote our own worldly and carnal interests.

3. Our obedience must be intire; all in us must be subject to the will of God, glorifying him with our bodies, and with our spirits, which are his. Our thoughts, affections, contrivances, counsels, choice, our words and actions, even to eating and drinking; the ordering and disposing of our estates and possessions, our trades and callings, our time, and whatever we call ours, must be governed by God's laws.

4. Our obedience must be universal, to all the laws of God without exception. We must not pick and chuse, as our inclinations and tempers lead us. The reason of our obedience must be God's authority; and whatsoever we find stamped with that, is a law to us, be it in our own judgments for or against us, reasonable or unreasonable, hard or easy, costly or cheap. Go teach, or make disciples, all nations, (saith our blessed Lord) baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Mat. xxviii. 19. He that breaketh the least of these commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, Mat. v. 19.

5. Our obedience must be constant, and hold out to the end. We must (whatever we now suffer for it) patiently continue in well-doing, Rom. ii. 6. And that to the end of our life, otherwise all our righteousness, which we have done, shall not be

mentioned, Ezek. xviii. 24.

This may suffice to be said of the two latter branches of your promise and vow in baptism. Now let us return to the first, which was to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the sless. And by this, when explained unto you, it will appear what the repentance is, which is required of persons to be baptized.

Q. What's the first of the three things which you vow to renounce in haptism?

A. The devil and all his works.

Q. Who the devil is, you have learned; but what are

the works of the devil?

A. Sins. The devil finneth from the beginning. For this cause was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, I John iii. 8.

Q. Are not temptations to fin the works of the devil?

A. Yes; Therefore he is called the tempter, Mat. iv. 3. I Theff. iii. 5.

§. When you promife to renounce the devil, and all his works; you promife to renounce and forfake all fin and wickedness, and to resist all the temptations of the devil, whereby he endeavours to draw you into fin, and never to imitate him in tempting others to fin.

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To renounce, and forfake all fin, when it is spoken of them, who have lived in fin all their life time hihterto, is the same with an actual and present conversion and repentance towards God, which is an abandoning of their whole former way of living. And such had been the life of those generally, who were first called by the preaching of the gospel to the christian faith, and admitted into the church by baptism. In infants, who understand nothing of any vice or virtue, nor have ever yet lived

lived in either, it can be only a promise and vow for the future, whereby they engage not to give way to natural corruption, nor wilfully and wittingly to

commit any fin.

The dominion that the devil hath gotten over men, he hath gotten by drawing them into sin: we therefore in the first place are to renounce this dominion of his, and never to submit unto him any more by sin, nor to take part with him in his rebellion against God our only rightful Lord. The least sin therefore we are bound never to cherish or indulge ourselves in. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosever doth not righteousness, is not of God. He that committeth sin, is of the devil. Whosever is born of God, doth not commit sin, I John iii. 8, 9, 10. If we will be in covenant with God, we must take God's part

against the devil and all his adherents.

Especially, we must renounce idolatry, which, as was shewed you, is the worshipping of devils, or fuch a way of worship, as devils have taught. We must renounce all dealings and contracts with the devil, all witchcraft, forcery, conjuring, and reforting to fuch persons as use diabolical arts, to consult them on any occasion; for this is to hold correspondence with the devil. We must cast off all pride and ambition, which caused the fall of the devil, and is to fall into his fnare and condemnation, 1 Tim. iii. 6. All envy, malice, wicked contrivances, and defires of doing evil to others, which are an imitation of Satan the adversary of God and man, I Pet. v. 8. We must beware of Apostasy, and falling away from the truth, like the devil, who abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, John viii. 44. And of all turning afide to herefy or fin after Satan. I Tim. v. 15. Of all murder or burt to others, as the devil was a murderer from the beginning, John Dd

viii. 44. Of all flandering and falfly accusing, which is his work, Rev. xii. 10. Of all lying, for the devil is the father of it, ibid. By a lye, he ruined man at first, Gen. iii. 4. And by lying prophets and false doctrines he still endeavours to ruin the church.

Secondly. You promife to refift and withstand all the temptations of the devil, of what fort foever. As never to be drawn away from the truth, by any fair speeches or plausible shews of false teachers, in whom the devil feems transformed into an angel of light, on purpose to deceive the simple. Be not tempted to entertain any low and unworthy thoughts of God, as the devil tempted Eve to do; or to any thing which fets open the door to immorality, impiety, libertinism, injustice, uncleanness, uncharitableness, sedition, rebellion, &c. Neither ever be affrighted out of the open profession of the truth, or practice of religion and virtue, by any perfecution, reproach, or evil of any fort that may befal you. We promise, even whilst we stand, to take heed lest we fall, I Cor. x. 12. To keep ourfelves always fober, free from both intemperance and passion; and vigilant, watching against all surprizes, and especially over our known weaknesses, and against those sins unto which we find ourselves naturally inclined, and whereunto the devil hath a great advantage of tempting us, from our constitutions and natural tempers, or from our accustomed course of life, and our callings and professions. Lastly, We promise to pray for strength to hold out, lest the temptation prove too hard for us, and we be led, or enter into temptation, Mat. xxvi. 41.

Q. What's the second thing you promised to renounce?

A. The pomps and vanity of this wicked world.

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6. It is not the world, as the creature of God, that here you promised to renounce, or to have nothing to do with; but the wickedness of the world, and all this wickedness which you have vowed to renounce, is in the men of the world; fo that by this wicked world are meant wicked men; for there is not wickedness in any creature, but in men and devils.

By the pomps of this wicked world were heretofore more especially meant certain solemnities and games, which were with great pomp, cost, magnificence, and fplendor, celebrated by the heathen in honour of their idols; and were many of them attended with almost all forts of bloody, inhuman, lewd and lascivious actions. These (God be blessed for it) are not now in use in the more civilized parts of the And therefore by the pomps of the wicked world, and our renouncing of them, we can mean only, first, Our abhorrence of all fuch idolatrous customs, and brutish abominations. And, secondly, Our resolution to abstain from all things amongst us. which too nearly refemble them in many particulars, ferving only to corrupt mens minds. Such as are most of our stage-plays, may-games, and other foolish games and sports, wherewith too many profane the holy festivals of the church. As also by the vanity of the wicked world, may well be meant all that childish affectation, and proud oftentation of fumptuousness and finery, in houses, furniture, dreffing up of meat, and costly apparel, multitude of attendants, defire of the upper hand, precedency, and the like.

You have promised, first, To renounce the whole world and worldly things whatfoever, fo far as never to grow fond of any of them, nor to let them have that love and esteem which are due to God only; in comparison of whose favour and service, you must ever account them most vile and contemptible. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, I John

I John ii. 15. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, Col. iii. 2. Tea, doubtless, (faith St. Paul) I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, Phil. iii. 8.

You have promised also, not to use any thing in this world finfully, transgressing any of those laws of God which he hath given to stint and direct you in the right use of every thing. You are to enjoy all earthly things with much indifferency whether you shall keep them, or lose them; with as much caution you are to use them, lest you do yourself or others hurt by them, as every drunkard, glutton, riotous, covetous, uncharitable person, and many more forts of people do, only heaping up provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. I add to these, all them who are so intent, and continually busied in their worldly affairs, that they allow themselves no time to worship God in, or to take care of their eternal concerns. O what will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own foul?

You have promised to renounce the great idols of the world, which St. John calls, all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which (faith he) is not of the Father, but of the world, I John ii. 16. That is, worldly pleafures, riches, and greatness, which gratify and feed sensual, covetous and ambitious desires; whereby you do not mean, that you will never grow rich, never enjoy any earthly pleasure, or accept of any honour or preferment; for all this you may fafely do, when God makes you a fair and honest way to them. But you have promised, not to be so bent on being rich, but to beware withal, lest you fall into temperation, and a snare, and into foolish and burtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, I Tim. vi. 9. lest the care of this world, and

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he deceitfulness of riches, choak the good feed, the word of God, and you become unfruitful, Mat. xiii. Lest you fall into a neglect of religion, contempt of heavenly riches, and uncharitableness to the poor; flealing, cheating, lying, and other corruptions, especially pride, oppression, riot, luxury, or difregard of the publick good. A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven, Mat. xix. And fo for honour, and worldly greatness, of what fort foever, you have promifed to take heed, that you grow not proud of them, that you fwell not too big, and be puffed up with a conceit of your parentage, nobility, or dignity; that you think not yourselves for these things better men in God's esteem, than the meanest of your neighbours; neither more at liberty than any of them from the laws of God or man, or more exempted from the service of God. and doing good in the world, or from reproof and correction for your faults: That you despise not the poorest of the people, as if God had made them to be your flaves.

You have renounced by vow, all defires of vain glory, Gal. v. 26. and loving the praise of men more than that which is of God only, John xii. 43.

You have promised absolutely to renounce all glorying in your shame, that is, in your sin; and setting an ill example before others, who either through too good an opinion of your wisdom, or too great a fear of your power, are too apt to follow it. All the honour you will have by this diabolical practice, is the honour of the devil, to be devils, and not to go to hell unattended with a great train, whom you have either bribed or frighted into the paths of destruction.

And here I take occasion once more to warn you all, my dear brethren, to take care that you be none of those who thus drudge almost continually for the devil and damnation; who make it both their daily business and delight, either to tempt men to do wic-

O fee to it, that you be not tempted by fuch people into any wicked practices. These are the very wickedest part of this wicked world, who are not content to fin alone, but strive to carry as many as they can get to hell with them. Enter not you therefore into the paths of the wicked, nor go in the way of evil men, Prov. iv. 14. Walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners. nor fit in the feat of the scornful, if you would be happy, P[al. i. 1. Conform not yourselves to the examples of the great, unless they be good. Neither judge of goodness by the practices and customs of men, but by the word of God. If finners entice you, consent you not, Prov. i. 10. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, Eph. v. 11. Walk not according to the course of this world, Rom. xii. 2.

Q. What's the third thing which you promised to renounce?

A. All the finful lusts of the flesh.

Q. What mean you by the flesh?

A. The same with the old, or unregenerate man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, Eph. iv. 22.

Q. What are the finful lusts of the flesh?

A. Such as these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcrast, variance, hatred, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such-like, Gal. v. 19.

Q. What mean you by renouncing all these?

A. A crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24.

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In the fignifieth either the body, or whole human nature. And God hath made many pleasant things in the world, and alloweth us to please our flesh with them. But the unregenerate and corrupt nature or the whole man as now corrupted by sin, is in the holy scripture called slesh, and the old man, in opposition to the spiritual and new man, or new creature. And the sinful lusts of the slesh in this sense are all the faculties and powers of our corrupt nature, as now prone and inclining to sin. And all these you have promised in baptism to renounce, whereby is to be understood, not your being altogether without them; but your not following, nor being led by them.

You have promifed not to be ruled and governed by your own carnal mind and judgment in truth and falshood, but by the word and teaching of God's Holy Spirit in the holy scripture; not to humour your own carnal will in your choice of good and evil, but by the precepts of God; not to please and satisfy your own carnal affections, but to delight in the good will and pleasure of God. To put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true boliness, Eph. iv. 22. Mortifying your mem-

bers which are upon the earth, Col. iii. 10.

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You are, I fay, to renounce your carnal mind, as it is against any divinely revealed truth, or desirous of unlawful, or vain knowledge, or likes not, or approves not of the good will of God; the carnal mind being enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. You must endeavour to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. You must renounce your own will, as it is in captivity to the law of sin and death, Rom. vii. 23. and not subject to the D d 4

law of God, Rom. viii. 7. And you are to submit it wholly to the will of God; even as did Abraham in offering his only and beloved fon at God's command; and 70b in suffering patiently the loss of all that he had. And you are to deny and restrain your affections, when fet on unfit objects, or grown excessive or irregular. You must not humour, but labour to mortify your fenfual appetites. especially in meats, and drinks, and other things wherewith the flesh is apt to be too much delighted. And lastly, You are to renounce, not only some of these sinful lusts, but all of them; yea, so resolutely, as to cut off the right-hand, and pluck out the righteye, rather than be tempted by them to offend God, Mat. v. 29, 30. Your whole spirit, and soul, and body are to be fanctified, I Theff. v. 25.

You may now see, I hope, by what hath now been said, How great a thing that repentance, and for-saking of sin is, which is required of persons to be baptized. It implieth a mortifying and crucifying the slesh with all its sinful lusts; a denying ourselves what we most earnestly long for, that we may be the disciples of Christ, and obey him. When this is done, the main work is done. 'Tis only the lust of the slesh that makes the world, and the things thereof, temptations to us; our lusts being mortified, these are no longer temptations to us; and when these cease to be temptations, the devil is disarmed in a great measure, and hath nothing almost left him to

tempt us with.

This repentance, with faith and obedience, make up your part of the covenant sealed in baptism; and which you are concerned most faithfully to perform, even as you hope for the blessings promised on God's part.

Q. Is there any command in holy scripture, that you should have Sureties, or God-fathers and God-mothers?

A. No; There is not.

fathers and god-mothers, as before; or fureties, as here; or witnesses, as some rather think fit to call them; it is acknowledged, that they are not of divine institution; neither absolutely necessary to be made use of in baptism, as the baptism were no baptism without them. And yet we judge them so far from being unlawful to be made use of in baptism, that the use of them is very commendable, and to very good purpose, in case they be careful to discharge the trust, which they take upon themselves; which indeed is great, the not the same which many through mistake think it to be. They are of very antient use in the church, and are still commanded by this church to be used, as a thing very expedient.

They are called god-fathers and god-mothers, because they are chosen by the parents, and desired to assist in the dedication of their child to God in this sacrament of its regeneration or new birth. And they are called sureties, because in some things they

undertake to the church for the child.

They do not undertake either to God, or the church, that the child shall perform the promise which is there made by them in its name. This is a thing quite out of their power, and it were very unreasonable for any one to expect it from them. It is the child who promiseth this, by them, and stands bound to God saithfully to perform his promise, when he comes to age. That which they undertake, and are sureties for, is this; That the child shall, as much as in them lieth, be taught, so soon as he is able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he then made by them, and be put in mind by them, as there shall be occasion for it, and they can

have opportunity to do it, to hear fermons, and to be catechifed, and to use all diligence to learn and do his duty. And herein they are affishing to the parents, charitably joining with them, and assuring them of the best help they can make them in the child's christian education; they are also charitable assistants to the child, lending it their voice, and speaking for it. And they are sureties to the church, that the child shall want no good instruction, which they can give it, and that they will call upon the parents, if they seem negligent, to do their duty also.

Thus then the case stands in this matter: First, It is supposed at present, that the children of christian parents are, when but infants, capable of being folemnly dedicated to God in baptism; God by his minister is ready to receive them, and visibly to feal his part in the covenant unto them. Secondly. This granted, it is necessary that the infant's part be also sealed unto; for there is no covenant but between two parties, and both of them confenting, and some way fignifying their confent; and this in the prefent case by our blessed Saviour's command is to be done by this facrament of baptism. Thirdly, Seeing infants cannot do this for themselves, and that for want of understanding; it remaineth, that they who have a right to dispose them for their good, and a charge from God to take care of them, see that this be done for them, and these are their christian parents. Fourthly, Because it may sometimes so happen, that parents are not so well fitted to instruct their children themselves, as they ought to be; or may possibly grow careless and negligent in the doing of it; or by fickness, or unavoidable absence, may behinder'd, or by death for ever prevented; therefore the church of its abundant care doth order, that the parents shall take to themselves some of their relations and friends, who have been well instructed themselves, and have been admitted to the Lord's table, to join with them in their care.

And because some are apt to take offence at this. that our church declareth, that tho' the father of the child may (if he will) be present, yet he shall not be constrained to be so when his child is baptized: and she hath ordered, that when he is present, he shall not be allowed to answer for his child himself: which is thought by fome very unreasonable: I would defire you to consider these things: First, It is not forbidden to any father to be present, if he please: only 'tis faid, he shall not be constrained to it; and there is reason enough for that upon this two-fold account: First, That possibly he cannot at that time conveniently be present, and it seems hard either to constrain him to his hurt, or to defer the child's baptism any longer; and it may be charitably thought the parent would hardly absent himself willingly on fuch an occasion : And, secondly, That it is well enough known, that the fureties are procured by him, and have all his authority to present the child to baptifm committed to them; fo that, were he present, he could do no more, than now he doth by them.

Secondly. As to his not being allowed to speak for the child, let it be considered, first, That it is very probable, that the church's meaning is no more than this. That the father shall not be allowed to answer singly bimself alone, and so the god-fathers and god-mothers be used no otherwise, than as witnesses that he did so: Which is the very thing that they would have, who are wont to call them witnesses. But if a father present will answer together with the fureties, I do not think the church will find any fault in it. Secondly. There is no need however of his answering himself, whilst they who do it, do it with his consent, and at his request. But, thirdly, it is not thus ordered, as tho' the church supposed it unlawful for the father to be present, or to answer for his own child; but because (as was faid) he doth anfwer fufficiently by others of his own choice, and because because the father is naturally obliged to do all he can for the good of his child: And, lastly, That the fureties may look upon themselves to be the more strongly obliged to perform what they have promised, by their having immediately themselves transacted for the child, even as the they had been

its natural parents.

This is enough, I suppose, to be said in a matter of this nature; and one would think no christian could be offended to see our church take so much pious care for the good education of christian children. It were indeed to be wished, that these sureties would more conscientiously discharge the trust they have taken upon them, and that parents would make choice of fitter persons to this purpose than they often do. And certainly, if we have any christians lest among us, this may be easy to do; seeing what these sureties do here more solemnly promise to do, is no more, but what every christian is bound to do for his neighbours, that is, to instruct, advise and reprove them as he sees occasion, and can have opportunity for it.

Q. Is there any express command in boly scripture to baptize infants?

A. No; but there was a command of old to cir-

cumcise infants. Gen. xvii. 12.

Q. Is there any express mention made in the scrip-

ture of any infants who were baptized?

A. No; but of whole housholds baptized, there is; wherein tis probable there were infants, Acts xvi. 15, and 33.

§. That the infants of believing parents have a right to be baptized, your catechism affirmeth, and giveth you only this reason for it, That they promise by others to do what, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform. You told me before, That in persons to be baptized there was required

quired repentance, whereby they forfake fin, and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God, made to them in that facrament. Now, if repentance and faith be necessary in those who are baptized, there seems great reason for asking you this question, Why then are infants baptized? For because of their tender age, being at that time unable to understand what they do, or what is done for them, or the meaning of these two things, faith and repentance, 'tis plain they cannot perform what is required, that is, they can neither repent nor believe. Why then should the church admit them to baptism?

The answer you are taught to make is this, That tho' they cannot yet repent and believe, yet by their sureties they promise both to believe and repent, and by this promise they stand bound to do both, when

they come to age.

But they who are against the baptizing of infants, will not be satisfied with this answer: For they suppose, first, That infants can make no promise at all, and therefore cannot be bound to any thing by a promise which others pretend to make in their name without their consent. And, secondly, That faith and repentance being the things that qualify for baptism, it cannot suffice to promise that they will do fo afterward. Laftly, That our Saviour having instituted baptism as the rite of admitting persons into the church, none are to be admitted thereby without his express command or allowance, which they suppose cannot be produced for the baptizing of infants. And indeed there feems, at the first hearing of all this, to be a great deal of reason in it. It will soncern you therefore to understand not only the meaning of the answer you have given, but also the fufficiency of it. And to this purpose I must desire you to attend diligently to what I shall now tell you.

In the first place, you are to take notice, That what the sacrament of circumcision was of old to the Jews, the same is the sacrament of baptism now unto us christians. They are solemn rites appointed by God himself for the admitting of persons into the covenant of grace; so that if infants might be admitted into this covenant by circumcision, nothing hinders why they may not also be admitted into the same by baptism.

Circumcifion was commanded first unto Abraham, Gen. xvii. 10. Whereof thus faith St. Stephen, Acts vii. 8. God gave him the covenant of circumcision; not meaning that circumcision was itself the covenant, but as it is expressly called, Rom. iv. 11. the sign of circumcision, and Gen. xvii. 11. the token of the covenant.

That we may know what covenant this was, whereof circumcifion was the fign or token; we are yet farther to observe. That God had first called Abram. Gen. xii. I. faying, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's bouse, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him. Here was a covenant begun between God and Abra-He, at God's command and call, forfook the idolatrous country, wherein he dwelt; and left his natural kindred and family there, all but fuch as were willing to accompany him; and Abram obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went, faith the apostle, Heb. xi. 8. Only he believed God's promife, that he would bless him, and that in his feed all nations should be blessed. After this, God gives him another command, Gen. xvii. 1. faying, I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfeet; and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly; or as it is, ver. 7. I will establish my covenant between me and thee,

thee, and thy feed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee, and to thy feed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy feed after thee, the land wherein thou art a firanger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. and I will be their God. For as yet he did only fojourn in the land of promise, as in a strange land, dwelling in tabernacles, Heb. xi. 9. After all this God layeth a feverer command on Abram, to facrifice his only fon; which Abram obeying, God renews, and confirms his promife with an oath, Gen. xxii. 16. By myself bave I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou bast done this thing, and bast not with-held thy fon, thine only fon; that in bleffing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy feed as the stars in the beaven, &c. And ver. 18. in thy feed shall all the nations of the earth be blefsed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

You may here observe, that God promised to Abram three things: First, A very numerous, or rather innumerable iffue and off-spring. Secondly, The good land of Canaan for an inheritance. Thirdly, That in his feed all the nations of the earth should be bleffed. And he required of Abram also three things. First, To leave his father's house and the country he then lived in, relying on God's promife for another, and a better. Secondly, To walk before God, or as in his presence, and be perfect, or upright and fincere. Thirdly, To be ready to part with what was dearest to him at God's command. And thus Abram believing God, and in faith leaving all to obey his voice, 'tis faid of him, Gen. xv. 6. He believed in the Lord, and he imputed it unto him for righteousness. This was the covenant made with

Abraham and his feed.

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nd e, But say some, that which God here covenants with Abraham for, seems to be no more but a numerous posterity, and a plentiful inheritance; and of this covenant it is that circumcision was a token, and not of the covenant of grace. In answer to

this,

this, you must know, that tho' these temporal blessings were promised expressly, yet there was something else implied in these promises; neither indeed is it easy to understand otherwise what should be the meaning of that part of the promise which saith, that in his seed all the nations of the earth

should be blessed.

But to clear this, let us hear what the scripture faith concerning it. St. Paul affures us, that the feed to which the promites were made, is Christ, Gal. iii. 16. And with him agreeth St. Peter: Te (faith he to the Fews) are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abrabam, And in thy feed shall all the kindreds of the earth be bleffed. Unto you first, God having raised up bis Son Jesus, bath sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities, Acts iii. 25. And as concerning the feed of Abraham, which was to receive this bleffing from God, we are taught, that tho' first the bleffing was sent to the natural seed of Abraham, the Jews; yet was it not to them alone promised, but to his spiritual seed of all nations; that is, to as many as should imitate him in his faith and obedience. Know ye therefore, (faith St. Paul) that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, Gal. iii. 7. And again, They which be of faith, are bleffed with faithful Abraham, ver. 9. and ver. 29. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. And fo, Rom. iv. 13. The promise that he should be the beir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to bis feed through the law; but through the righteousness of faith; and, ver. 16. Therefore is it of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be fure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abrabam, who is the father of us all. And then concerning Abraham's faith we read, ver. 23, 24. It was not written for his sake alone, that is, was imputed to bim;

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The whole Religion of a Christian. 417 bim; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the

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From these and the like places of holy scripture it is plain enough, That the promises of temporal bleffings to Abrabam and his feed, fuch as the possession of the land of Canaan, and delivering them from their enemies, and the like, were to be taken in a higher fense, than the words do naturally fignify, as typifying spiritual and heavenly bleffings in Christ Jesus to all sincere and faithful christians. So Gal. iii. 13, 14. Christ bath redeemed us from the curse of the law, &c. (faith the apostle) that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit thro' faith. And this promise to Abraham, St. Paul calleth the preaching of the Gospel to him, ver. 8. The scripture foreseeing, that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached the gospel unto Abrabam, saying, In thee shall all nations of the earth be bieffed. So that he looked not only for an earthly Canaan, but for a city which bath foundations. whose builder and maker is God; that is, for heaven, lieb. xi. 10.

Hence we may fafely conclude, That tho' there was a peculiar covenant made with Abraham, to give unto his natural feed the land of Canaan; yet was there another covenant principally intended, and shadowed forth by that, and that this covenant assured all sincere believers of spiritual and heavenly blessings through Christ, and was the same with the gospel covenant in substance. Hereof circumcision was then ordained of God to be the sign and seal; or, as St. Paul saith, Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which be had, being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe,

tho' they be not circumcifed, that righteousness might

be imputed to them also, Rom. iv. 10, 11.

Well then, Abraham, you fee, had that faith whereby he was justified, and which was imputed for righteousness, before he was circumcifed, and circumcifion was a feal of it. And thus all perfons of age, who are converted to the faith of the -gospel from a state of infidelity, must have, and make profession of faith in Christ, before they be baptized. But then observe, that not only such as Abraham, who did actually believe, and underflood the meaning of circumcifion, were circumcifed, but infants also received this token of the covenant; and that by the command of God, who commanded them to be circumcifed on the eighth day, Gen. xvii. 12. Their infancy, and want of understanding, did not then hinder them from entering into covenant, even the same covenant of grace, as you have heard, by the old facrament of circumcifion; and what reason can be given why fuch infants may not now as well enter into the fame covenant by baptism? That infants, who understand nothing at all, may be obliged by covenants made by others in their behalf, and for their good, is acknowledged by the common practice of And that they may enter into covethe world. nant with God, appears also from the words of Moses, Deut. xxix. 10. Te stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your little ones, ver. II. To enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day, ver. 12.

Now, when our bleffed Saviour instituted the sacrament of baptism, he instituted no new covenant; he only instituted a new sign, token or seal of the same covenant, to be used thenceforward instead of the former. And therefore they who were before capable of this same covenant, and

the benefits of it, are so still; and there can be no good reason given, why they may not be admitted into it as well by baptism now, as by circumcision then.

Our bleffed Saviour being to communicate the bleffing of God promifed to Abraham unto all nations, whereas before he had fent forth his difciples to preach the gospel to the Fews only, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the bouse of Israel, Mat. x. 5, 6. He after his refurrection (as before was faid) thus inlarged their commission; Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them, Mat. xxviii. 19. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to

every creature, Mark xvi. 15.

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You hear a command to teach and baptize people of all nations; but now how shall the apostles know what fort of persons in every nation they shall baptize? Whether they were to baptize none but fuch persons only as were capable of being taught, or infants also, who were uncapable of it? For our Saviour, in what is written concerning this matter, fays not a word to them, to fignify whether he would have infants baptized or no. And truly there was no need that he should; for infants had all along hitherto, even by the command of God, been admitted into the covenant among the Teres by circumcifion; therefore the apostles being now commanded to admit not only fews, but persons of all nations by baptism, without any exception of infants, who were before admitted by another rite, must needs understand the command of baptizing to extend to them also. Whereas therefore fome call upon us to shew a command given by Christ to baptize infants, we say it is altogether needless to shew such a command; but if they are to be excluded from baptism, it is very necessary that they who contend to have E e 2 them'

them excluded, do shew where Christ commanded to exclude them, which we are very sure they cannot do.

But say they, If infants may be baptized now, because they were formerly circumcised; yet only such infants are to be baptized, as were formerly circumcised; and these are males only; therefore semale infants ought still to be excluded from baptism. Now to this, whatever other reason there may be why male children only were circumcised, it is answer enough to say, that males only were circumcised, because they only could well receive such a sign in the sless a circumcision was. But semales being granted by them who alledge this to be as much within the covenant as males, and Christ having ordained a new sign, whereof they are as capable as the males; nothing now hindereth, but that they should be partakers of it.

Our Saviour might chuse baptism rather than circumcifion on many accounts. As, first, He himself being the only facrifice for our fins, once for all to redeem us by his own blood; might now think fit to continue none of those bloody rites and ceremonies which were in use formerly, and were in any kind typical, and shadows of his bloody facrifice; and for this reason he abolished both the facrifices, and the paffover, and circumcifion. Or, fecondly, He, the promised seed, being come, to fignify and prefigure whose finless nature, circumcision might well be ordained to be of constant use among the fews, of whom he was to come, it was now time to lay it aside. Or, thirdly, Because, when the law was given by the hand of Moles, circumcifion was made use of as a ceremony, whereby the circumcifed person obliged himself to observe all things therein; from which christians are by Christ set free. Hence those words of St. Paul, Gal. v. 2, 3. I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcifed, Christ shall profit you nothing.

thing. For I testify to every man who is circumcised. that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Fourthly, Christ might think it fittest, now that he was sending his apostles among the Gentiles to convert them to the christian faith, thereby to make of them and the believing Jews one christian church, to ordain such a rite of initiation, as neither of them could account strange, or except against, it being of common use before with both of them Circumcifion was as the first stone in that wall of partition, the law of ceremonies, whereby the Gentile world stood divided from the church of Israel, and on this account it was an odious thing to them, and for the want of it they were as odious to the Jews; but baptisms, or washings and purifications by water they were neither of The Gentiles used to wash on them strangers to. fundry religious accounts, chiefly fuch as were initiated into any of their facred mysteries; and the Tews admitted profelytes or converts from Gentilism by baptism, and, as it is probable enough, all their own females. Hence was baptism a very proper fign or token of the covenant whereby thefe two forts of people were now to be made one new man in Christ. Which St. Paul calls the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men; that the Gentiles should be fellow beirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, Eph. iii. 4, 5, 6. Or, laftly, Because circumcision was a fign which male children only could well receive, therefore Christ might think fit to change it into baptism, which female children might as well receive as the males; that it might hereby be made unquestionable and evident, that the blessing of Abraham was now come upon all, without regard to fex any more, than to nation or family; but as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; so that there is neither few nor Greek, there Ee 3

is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; but they are all one in Christ Jesus, Gal.

iii. 27, 28.

It is certain, that whole housholds or families were baptized. As God commanded not Abraham only to be circumcifed, but all his family, Gen. xvii. 23, 27. So we find, that Lydia and her houshold, Acts xvi. 15. and the keeper of the prison, and all his, were baptized, ver. 33. And yet we have no notice given of the faith of any one in those families, but of the master and mistress. And likely enough it is, that there were in them some infants; yet this I am willing to wave, because there is no certainty of it.

But thus much is certain, that our blessed Saviour bad that little children should not be hindred from being brought unto him for his blessing; and that he gave this reason for it, because of such is the kingdom of God, Luke xviii. 16. That he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, Mar. x. 16. Whence it appears, that infants are fit to receive the blessing of Christ, and may enter into the kingdom of God. Now on what account can they be capable of Christ's blessing, and of the kingdom of God, which imply

all that belongeth to the inward and spiritual grace, and yet be uncapable of the outward sign in bap-

tifm?

Lastly, St. Paul saith of the children of Christian parents, yea, tho' but one of the parents, either the father or the mother be a christian, or a believer; that they are holy; but if neither of the parents be christian, then they are unholy, I Cor. vii. 14. Now in what sense can the children of such parents be called holy? This will best be found by considering the apostles argument here used. He is proving it to be lawful for a believing husband to abide with his unbelieving wife, and likewise for

for the believing wife to dwell with her unbelieving husband. And the reason he gives for it is this, that the unbelieving busband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; that is, it often cometh to pass, that the believing party is by God made the happy instrument of converting the unbeliever to the christian faith; if it were not so, (saith the apostle) then were your children unclean, or uncapable of christian privileges, being born of parents who are both unbelievers; and so uncapable of baptism, feeing fuch parents would take no care to have them educated as christians, neither could they dedicate their children to Christ, in whom they themselves did not believe. But now, (saith he) if either of the parents be a believer, then are your children boly, if not by the inward fanctification of the Holy Spirit, yet at least by an outward federal holiness, such as is enough to give them a title to baptism; it being to be hoped, that the believing parent will fee to their christian education. as because of his own faith in Christ, and interest in his children, he hath a right to dedicate them to him. If this be not St. Paul's meaning, it will prove hard for any one to make us understand what he meant by this discourse; and if it be his meaning, as we may be confident it is, this alone is enough to filence all disputers against infantbaptism.

Q. Tou have said, that children baptized are bound themselves to perform the promise which they have made by their sureties. If it be so, are not yet the sureties concerned to see as well as they can to this, that these children be taught to understand the promise they made, and as soon as they can, own it, and take it upon themselves?

A. Yes, certainly, they are to take care that the children be taught, so soon as they are able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession they made by them; and when by catechizeing they have learnt this, that they be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him.

In the primitive church. And they who quarrel most with our church about this facred ordinance, would be hard put to it to find any colour for what they do; unless they could think it reasonable to blame any church for taking all possible care, that no one member of it should want any thing whereof it is capable, and which may be any help to hasten its growth, and bring it as soon

as may be to full strength.

It is become too manifest by fad experience, that of baptized persons many do never become good christians; nor are any thing benefited by the fermons they hear, or the books they read, but are turned about with every wind of doctrine, and made the easy prey of any seducer, to be led by him into herefy, or vice, and even into atheism itself, for want of good and early instruction in the grounds and principles of the christian religion. For want of catechizing they continue ignorant, and a blind man is easily led into a ditch. The neceffity of catechizing is fo apparent, and on fo many accounts, that I will now fay nothing to convince you of it, more than what hath been said already. This ought to be the first, care both of parents and fureties, to fee that children be taught as they become able to learn, which most of them would much earlier be, than now they are, were that

that pains taken with them by their parents, as it

is very fit they should take.

In the next place, it is highly expedient, that fo foon as they are well instructed, they should be perfuaded and brought to be confirmed. You must all, young people, some time or other, own and take upon yourselves the promise and vow which in your infancy was made for you by others; if you do not, tho' it was done for your benefit and good, yet can you be no better at all for it. Nay, you must either publickly in the church, take upon you this promife, and acknowledge yourselves bound by it; or it cannot be known that you look upon yourselves as concerned to be good christians, neither therefore can the church own you as members of it, nor admit you to partake of the privileges belonging to none but fuch. Nay, fay what you will, you are not fincere christians, 'till you openly acknowledge yourselves bound to be fo, if you have an opportunity of doing it: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, Rom. x. 10. Outward confession must be joined with inward belief.

You have been baptized, you fay, and that was an outward confession of your christian faith. Yea, but that confession was made by others in your name, and you knew nothing of it. All it signified was, that you were thereby obliged to confess it yourselves when you came to age. Till then, this was enough, and the church owns you as perfons solemnly devoted to the obedience of Christ. Yet after all this, it is in your choice, now that you are of understanding to chuse; whether you will stand to your baptismal vow and covenant or no. Indeed, if you do not, you will not only lose all the benefits of your baptism, but also incur the greater punishment of apostates, and sacrilegious persons,

who have robbed God of that which was devoted to him, by them in whose right it then was so to dispose of you. Yet still you may chuse, and it is in your power to turn Atheifts, Idolaters, Jews, Mahometans, Libertines, Quakers, or what you will. Only you are not to hope for falvation. unless you continue good christians. Care hath been taken of you by your parents and fureties, to have you well instructed, or they are in a very great fault, and must consider how they will be able to answer for it; and now that you are instructed, so that you are able understandingly and deliberately to take all upon yourselves, if you refuse to do so, what can be thought of you, but that you dislike of all that hath been done for you. and are resolved not to be christians? When they have exhorted you to own your obligation to be christians publickly before the church, they have done all that was in their power to do for you, and all that was required of them; for their promise reacheth no farther, than the time of your coming to age, and the knowledge of your duty, and then to bring you, if they can, to the bishop, to be confirmed by him.

The meaning of which confirmation is briefly this: The bishop being the chief governor of that part of the church wherein you live, whose office it is to see, as well as he can, that both ministers and people in every parish do their duties; you are, when you are called unto it, before him and the congregation in the church affembled with him, openly to declare in the presence of Almighty God and the whole congregation, that you own the vow and promise that were in your baptism made in your name; that you there renew them, and acknowledge yourselves bound by them to live, and behave yourselves in all things as good christians. Thus you deliberately, and of your own

that your god-fathers and god-mothers had promised for you. This being done, you have the prayers of the church for you, That God would strengthen you with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in you his manifold gifts of grace, and fill you with the spirit of his holy fear. After which the bishop, laying his hands upon you, blesseth you, praying that God would defend you with his heavenly grace, that you may continue his for ever, and daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more, until you come unto his everlasting kingdom. Thus are you to be confirmed.

Our church doth not make confirmation a facrament, as the church of Rome doth; but declareth the contrary, that it is none, in the twenty-fifth article of religion. Neither doth she command it as a thing absolutely necessary to salvation; but only as a thing very expedient, and mightily conducing, if it be duly performed, to the well-being of the church, and edification of the members thereof. It is indeed absolutely necessary to do the thing, which in confirmation is done, fome way or other; that is, really and fincerely to own and take upon ourselves our baptismal promise and engagement. It is only then the manner or form of doing this, which is supposed indifferent; and therefore I would have you to consider, that where the thing is necessary to be done, and no rule or order is given by God himself about the manner or form of doing it; it must needs be in the power of the church to determine and appoint which way it shall be done. Our church therefore having thus decreed for her own children, and not without the example of the universal church in the first and purest ages of it, hath also very well ordained, that none shall be admitted to the

Q. Which is the other sacrament that Christ bath ordained in his church?

A. The supper of the Lord, called also the holy communion.

Q. Why was the sacrament of the Lord's supper ordained?

A. For the continual remembrance of the facrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

Q. Did Christ himself ordain this sacrament?

A. Yes, he did; as they were eating the passover, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body: And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of me, Mat. xxvi. 26, 27. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24.

Q. Was this ordained to be a lasting ordinance to

continue always in the church?

A. Yes; for a continual remembrance. As often as we eat this bread, and drink this cup, we do shew the Lord's death, till he come, 1 Cor. xi. 26.

§. Concerning this facrament of the Lord's fupper, you are taught in your catechism these four things. First, Its divine institution, and the design of it. Secondly, The nature and parts of it. Thirdly, Its benefits. And, Fourthly, How we are to be prepared for it.

First, You are taught its divine institution, and the due sign and reason of it. The first question takes it for granted that it was ordained, and you were taught before, that a sacrament is a thing

ordain-

ordained by Christ himself. And if this were not so, it could not be a facrament. None but Christ can ordain an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace, so especially, as that it shall be a means whereby we receive it, and a pledge to assure us of it. Christ's institution of it we read in three of the Evangelists, and in St. Paul's former epistle to the Corintbians. You have said also, and proved too, that it was appointed for a standing ordinance to continue in the church of Christ till he come again. Yet want we not those among us this day, who have considence enough to say, That the twelve only, who were then eating and drinking with our Saviour at the table, were

commanded by him to do this.

You must take heed how you give ear to this. St. Luke and St. Paul do both of them fay, That our Saviour, delivering to them the bread, faid, Take, eat; this is my body, which is given, (fo the one) or broken (as the other) for you, Luke xxii. 19. I Cor. xi. 24. Do this in remembrance of And of the cup he faid, This is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you. Drink this in remembrance of me. Now I would ask, Who are they that are to do this in remembrance of Christ? Are they not all they, for whom his body was broken, and his blood shed? And whom are they for whom his body was broken, and his blood shed? Was this done for the twelve only, who then did fit and eat with him? Are these twelve the many, for whom his blood was shed? Mat. xxvi. 28. Did not Christ die for others, as well as for the Twelve? And have not all they for whom he died on the cross, as much reason as they, to do such a thing as this in remembrance of him who was crucified for them. St. Paul was none of the Twelve, yet he faith that he received that of the Lord; and what he received of him, he delivered also to the Corinthians, I Cor. xi. 23. teaching them how to behave themselves at that sacred feast, and telling them, that thus doing, they shewed the Lord's death till his coming; which yet could not be done by those christians of Corinth, who were not to live till that time; therefore he must mean, that as they then by doing this shewed the Lord's death, so should all christians continue doing till that day. This then is a sacrament for all christian people; and 'tis no indifferent thing left to our own choice to receive it, or let it alone; but we

are all under a command to receive it.

Yea, that this facrament was instituted for a lasting ordinance in the christian church, is plain enough even from the end or defign of its institution, as it is expressed in these words of Christ, Do this in remembrance of me; and in those of St. Paul, Te do shew, or shew ye, the Lord's death. Whence I fay, 'tis very plain, that it was inftituted for a folemn commemoration of the most aftonishing mercy that ever was shewn to men. And can we think that this care of having Christ's death folemnly commemorated was no more, but to fee that the twelve should then remember it? which yet they could not do; for it was a thing not yet past, but to come; or that the christians of that age only should keep it in remembrance, a thing which one would think they could hardly fail to do, without the help of a remembrancer. or any facrament to bring it to mind? Certainly there is, and will be whilft the world flands, the fame, if not greater cause for celebrating this holy facrament, as then there was. What age of the world shall that be, wherein men shall not be bound to keep up a thankful remembrance of the death of their loving Saviour, who shed his blood for them? If in all ages men will be bound to this, and if our dying Redeemer, in the same night that

The whole Religion of a Christian. 431 that be was betrayed, (as St. Paul faith, 1 Cor. xi. 23.) appointed a folemn way of doing this; what reason can possibly be given, why men should not to the end of the world think themselves obliged to this way of doing it, which he himself hath commended to us?

Whatever therefore Socinians, or their disciples herein the Quakers, shall say to the contrary, regard it not; but account the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as it is indeed, a most holy ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be observed most religiously of all christians till his second coming; and think your communicating therein a necessary christian duty, which no one can wilfully lay aside and neglect, without incurring the highest displeasure of our righteous Lord, by so despising at once both his sovereign authority, and incompara-

ble goodness.

All great and remarkable deliverances and benefits ought to be kept in remembrance with an holy joy and thanksgiving by them who share in them, and they will be so kept of all persons who have any fense of good-nature and gratitude left in them. But where the benefit is most extraordinary and wonderfully great, no good-natured man will content himself with a general remembrance, or with an inward grateful sense of it only, or with common and ordinary expressions of it outwardly. The whole world therefore hath always been wont to express and testify its gratitude and joy for fuch bleffings, and to excite and revive a more affecting fense thereof both in themselves and others, in some more notable solemnity, as of feafting, and inviting their friends to rejoice with them. And thus it is our bleffed Saviour's will, that we should frequently revive in ourselves a most thankful sense of his death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby, by keeping an holy festival festival solemnity, or religious seast, called the supper of the Lord, not only because our gracious Lord did institute it at the last paschal supper which he kept before his death with his apostles; but because our blessed Lord himself is at this Holy supper or feast, both the entertainer, and the entertainment; and we are to feast on him, in a thankful acknowledgment and commemoration of his most amazing love, and compassion to us sinners and enemies, in giving himself to be crucified, and to be made the food of our souls.

This feast is for the same reason called, The table, and The cup of he Lord, 1 Cor. x. 29. The cup of blessing, and the breaking of bread, and the communion, or communicating of the body and blood of Christ, ver. 19. And it may fitly enough be called, the christian passover, being observed in commemoration of our escaping the wrath of God by the shedding and sprinkling of his blood.

When God destroyed all the first-born in Egypt, and thereby forced the king to let the children of Israel go out from their cruel bondage, and wretched flavery under him; he commanded the Israelites by Moses, that a lamb should that night be killed in every family, and the blood of it being sprinkled on the lintel, and on the fide posts of the door of every house, it should be roasted and eaten by them; promising them, that the destroying angel, fent by him to flay the first-born of Egypt, seeing the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doors, should pass over their houses, without any harm to them that dwelt in them. Neither were they thus to do at that time only, but they were commanded, that in remembrance of this their wonderful deliverance out of Egypt, they should ever after in all their generations hold the like feast on the same day in every year, Exod. xii. 14. This day shall be unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep

keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations, you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. which taketh away the fin of the world, John i. 29. A Lamb without blemish, and without spot, by whose precious blood we are redeemed, I Pet. i. This holy Lamb, even Christ our passover, is facrificed for us, I Cor. v. 7. And by his facrifice we have deliverance from the miserable bondage of fin and Satan, and from the wrath to come; and therefore are we commanded to keep this feast called the Lord's supper, that we may for ever shew ourselves thankful for this wonderful mercy. Of the paffover God faid to the Israelites, Thou Shalt Shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt; and it shall be for a fign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth. And thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year, Exod. xiii. 8, 9. And thus faith St. Paul to christians; As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do Bew, or do ye shew the Lord's death till be come. How but by doing this? That is, by bleffing, breaking, distributing, pouring out, taking, eating and drinking, of bread and wine; and thereby representing the wounding and breaking of his body, the shedding or pouring out of his blood; and thereby shewing our belief of it, our thankfulness for it, our confiding in it; shewing this, I say, not only to the eyes of men, confeiling before the world our faith, and rejoicing in our crucified Tefus; but also before God, confessing to him our fins and demerits, and pleading before him, for the obtaining of his mercy and pardon, nothing elfe but the bloody facrifice of his beloved Son, as

the only propitiation and atonement for our fins, and the only thing of sufficient value to prevail

for pardon and acceptance.

We should at this heavenly feast sing forth the praises of our Redeemer, and the goodness of God to our fouls, in hymns of praise, with joy, making melody in our bearts unto the Lord, Eph. v. 19. Saying, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our fins in his own blood, and bath made us kings and priests unto God and bis Father, to bim be glory and dominion for ever, Rev. i. 5, 6. It was God's command to the Israelites, That in all their feasts they should rejoice before him, Deut. xvi. 11. And the heathen people were wont to do the fame. faying, That a hymn is with more value with God, than gold. And divine things were by their wife men commanded to be made the subject of their thoughts in their religious feasts. If (faith one of them) we be filled with God, he brings with him a never-ceasing feast. When the feast was at an end, they offered a drink-offering, and fung a fong of praise, and so departed. Our bleffed Saviour, taking the bread and cup, gave thanks, and bleffed God. And before they departed, they fung an hymn, Mat. xxvi. 30. Hence hath this facrament been called the eucharist, or a thanksgiving, and the cup of bleffing, I Cor. x. 16. And yet, after all, our thankful commemoration of Christ's death will fall short of what it ought to be, if it be not that of the hand, and of the whole man, as well as that of the heart and tongue. It was God's command, that in all the Fewish feasts, none should appear before the Lord empty, but every man should give as he was able, Deut. xvi. We must remember to present our bodies a living facrifice, boly and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. And then, to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with

The whole Religion of a Christian. 435 with such sacrifices God is well pleased, Heb. xiii. 16.

I need to say nothing here of the death of Christ, nor of its being a sacrifice, because of these I have told you enough in explaining the creed.

Q. Is Christ facrificed in this ordinance?

A. No; We are fanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, Heb. x. 10.

6. You fay very well; here is in this facrament no facrificing of Christ, but a folemn commemoration of his facrifice by this facred rite commanded to be made in his church. We do not herein, as is pretended to be done in the Romish church, and in their mass, offer up our Saviour a propitiatory facrifice for the quick and the dead. We only, according to Christ's own institution, commemorate that facrifice, which he himself once offered for sin. In that he died, (saith the apostle) he died unto sin once; but being raised from the dead, he dieth no more, Rom. vi. 9, 10. When he had offered one sacrifice for fins, he for ever fat down on the right hand of God, Heb. x. 12. For by one offering bath he perfected for ever them that are sanctified, ver. 14. He was not to offer himself often, as the high-priest entered into the most holy place once every year with the blood of others; for then be must have often suffered since the foundatio nof the world; but now once, in the end of the world, bath be appeared to put away fin by the sacrifice of bimself, Heb. ix. 25, 26. He was once offered to bear the fins of many, ver. 28. That idol therefore of the papifts, which the church of Rome persuades the people so much to confide in, and to pay so dear for, is a mere nothing. It is a vain and impious fiction, to bring the priefts Ff2

into veneration with the ignorant and blindfolded people; who are taught to believe, that a mass-priest by muttering three or four Latin words can turn bread into God, and then can facrifice him again, and by devouring the whole facrifice himfelf obtain remission of sins both for the quick and the dead. O bless God, by whose providence you are born and educated in a church, that is very desirous, and useth all means to make you knowing men; that you may not be led away by the cunning of deceivers, and taught to believe such blasphemous absurdities as these. Vide the 31st of the thirty-nine articles of religion.

The supper of the Lord is an holy festival rite, or action, appointed by Christ for the more solemn commemoration of his one sacrifice of himself once for all on the cross, for the atonement of our sins, and for the procuring for us the grace of the new covenant, whereinto we were solemnly

admitted by baptism.

Q. What is the outward part, or sign of the Lord's supper?

A. Bread and wine, which the Lord hath com-

manded to be received.

Q. What is the inward part, or thing fignified?

A. The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper.

Q. Do you verily and indeed eat and drink the

body and blood of Christ in this sacrament?

A. Yes; Except we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us, John vi. 53.

Q. Is it not bread and wine, which you eat and

drink?

A. Yes; By eating bread, and drinking wine, we shew the Lord's death, 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Q. Do the faithful only really eat and drink the

flesh and blood of Christ?

A. Yes; He that cometh to Christ, and believeth on him, shall never hunger nor thirst, but have everlasting life, John vi. 35.

§. Every facrament (as you have been taught) is made up of two parts, a visible sign, and an invisible grace. And here you are taught what both these be in this facrament. The visible sign is the bread and wine, broken and poured out, given, taken, eaten and drunk: The thing fignified is the body and blood of Christ, or Christ crucified, confecrated by God, broken and wounded by his crucifiers, and his blood shed by the fame wicked hands, taken, and eaten, and drunk by the faithful in this holy facrament. All this may be learned by the words of institution, and by the relation given us by the evangelists, and St. Paul. As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and bleffed it, faith St. Matthew, chap. xxvi. 26. That is, in St. Luke's words, chap. xxii, 19. He gave thanks. By this bleffing or thankfgiving, the bread was made holy bread, or bread confecrated, and separated from its common and ordi-. nary to an holy and religious use; that is, to be fymbolically the body of Christ, or facramental fign of his body. Then it followeth, He brake it; and by this breaking, it was yet farther made more fit to fignify his wounded body. Thus broken, he gave it to them that were present, commanding them to take, and to eat it. Commanding the bread to be received, he faid of it, This is my body, that is, This bread is it which I have appointed to represent my crucified body, which is given or broken; that is, which is now about to be given and broken, or to be crucified, for you. After the fame manner he speaketh of the cup, or of the Ff 3

wine in the cup, and calling it his blood of the New Testament, that is, sacramentally so, or the sign of it, he saith, Drink ye all of it. This bread then, and this wine, are the outward and

visible signs in this facrament.

Hence it is apparent enough, that the inward and spiritual grace, or thing signified, and received in the same sacrament, is the body and blood of Christ crucified. Our blessed Saviour giving his body to be crucified for us, and his blood to be shed for us, to free us from death by the sacrifice of himself, would have this great sacrifice of his represented to our eyes in this sacred action, which he hath commanded us to do, by the breaking of bread, and pouring out of wine; and the benefits of it communicated to us, by our receiving,

eating, and drinking thereof.

We must not think it enough for us, or that it will do us any good at all, to be only present, and stand gazing upon the confecrated elements, and on a mass-priest acting his part at the altar; for we are commanded ourselves to eat and drink. Neither must we account it enough for the laity to receive one part only of the elements in this facrament, that is, the bread alone, and not to drink of the wine; as tho' they were but half christians, or as tho' the blood of Christ were shed for priefts only. For our bleffed Saviour's command is this, Drink ye all of it, Mat. xxvi. 27. And accordingly they all drank of it, Mark xiv. 23. What an horrid presumption is it for any church, after this, to fay, that notwithstanding Christ's command, and the custom of the primitive church, she decrees the contrary? Neither can we allow ourselves to believe them, that talk of doing that in this facrament, which themselves cannot understand, nor unanimously agree to tell

us what it is, and yet would damn us for not believing it. They fay, and we must believe it, (whether we can or no) that after these words. This is my body, have been muttered over in Latin by the priest, and also those other of the cup, there is no longer any fubstance of bread and wine remaining; but there is made a transub-Itantiation of them (as they call it) into the flesh and blood of Christ. We are not, I say, to believe that there is any fuch change of the elements; for fo the facrament is maimed, and wants one part of it, the outward visible sign, and therefore is no facrament. We are very fure of it, that we fee, and fmell, and touch, and tafte bread and wine; and we are as fure that St. Paul calls them three times in three verses bread and wine, and that after the confectation of them, faying, Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. See I Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28. There is therefore bread and wine, after those words are pronounced; and that bread is it whereof it is faid, This is my body; and that wine is it whereof it is faid, This is my blood. And how are they fo, but facramentally or fymbolically? That is, they are visible signs, representing to our fenses that body and blood of Christ, or that once crucified Jesus, who is now to us here on earth invisible.

And yet the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received in this sacrament, as well as the bread and wine; which can only be done by faith, and therefore the faithful only can so take and receive them. He that cometh to me, and believeth on me, saith Christ, shall never hunger nor thirst. Why? Because he eateth of him the bread of life, John vi. 35. He that believeth on me, (saith he again) hath everlasting life, ver. 47. And if any man eat of this bread, he fiall

spall live for ever, ver. 51. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, bath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day, ver. 54. He that believeth in Christ crucified, he, and no other, hath eternal life; and the eating and drinking of his flesh and blood, having this same promise of eternal life, is our

believing in Christ crucified.

True, will you fay, This is the spiritual eating and drinking spoken of, John vi. But what's all this to the facrament we are now speaking of? Very much, and indeed all that gives life to this facred rite. For if, with the facramental, there be not a spiritual eating and drinking of Christ's flesh, the flesh profiteth nothing, no not tho' it were the very flesh of Christ's body, and not bread, that we The spiritual eating, which is believing, is not always facramental; but the facramental is always spiritual, or 'tis worse than not eating at all. What is to be eaten constantly as our spiritual food by faith, is to be eaten in the facrament in more folemn manner, with more ceremony, and more visibly, but by faith still. And fo, as our church teacheth in the 28th article, To fuch as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the fame, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of bleffing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the fupper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith. And in the next article, 'tis faid, The wicked, and fuch as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the facrament of the body and blood of Christ; yet in no wife are they partakers of Christ; but rather

The whole Religion of a Christian. 441 rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the fign or facrament of so great a thing. Such only as have true faith, receive Christ crucified for their Saviour; and that certainly is a real and true receiving of him, tho' it be spiritual only.

Q. What are the benefits, whereof we are par-

takers thereby?

A. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.

In they who rightly receive this facrament, do receive fome benefits by it; tho' very fadly true it is, that they who receive it not rightly and worthily, receive much hurt by it. They who receive it rightly, partake of the facrifice of Christ's death; and therefore they partake also of all the benefits of that facrifice, which are many and great.

Q. What's the chief benefit we receive in this

sacrament?

A. He that eateth Christ's slesh, and drinketh his blood, dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him, folin vi. 56.

Q. What advantage have you by that?

A. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 1.

fcripture, That our spiritual union with Christ Jesus our Lord, who is our head, and our husband, and we members of his body, and one slesh and spirit with him, is the fountain of our spiritual life, strength, and comfort. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, (saith he) except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except

ye abide in me, John xv. 4. I am the vine, ye are the branches. Without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, be is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned, ver. 5, 6. Of bis fulness we all receive, and grace for grace, John i. 16. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, Col. i. 19. And through him all good things are derived, and communicated unto us; he being our bead, from which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God, Col. ii. 19. This then is the principal benefit of Christ's sacrificed body and blood; even our spiritual union with him, thro' whom we are reconciled to the Father, as the members of his beloved Son. And hereby we are made members one of another, as all together making up that one body whereof he is the head. that is, the church his spouse. He loved the church, and gave himself for it, Eph. v. 25. He nourisheth and cherisheth it, ver. 29. And the members of it are members of bis body, of bis flesh, and of bis bones, ver. 30. And we being many are one bread, or loaf, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread, I Cor. x. 17. Eating of the facrifice of the altar, and being partakers of the Lord's table, we are feafted by God, and as members of his family, communicate together of his goodness, and grow up into Christ in all things, Eph. iv. 15.

For the better understanding of the answer you are taught to make unto this question, I need not, I hope, tell you, That bread and wine, or meat and drink, do nourish, strengthen and refresh your bodies. Blessed be God, who bringeth food out of the earth, wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and bread that strengtheneth man's heart,

Pfal.

Pfal. civ. 5. But you are to learn, that your fouls stand in as much need of nourishment, strengthening, and refreshment, as your bodies, do; tho' these must be of another nature, that is, spiritual, such as your souls are; and that, in the worthy receiving of this sacrament, they receive all these. For the body and blood of Christ crucified for you, are both the food and physick of your souls.

Observe then here, in the first place, That living persons, and none other, can be nourished by sood. It is therefore supposed, that the soul hath in it some spiritual life, when it cometh thus to be fed. Naturally our souls are now alive to sin only, and in baptism they profess to die unto sin, and live unto God, Rom. vi. 3. None but such regenerate persons, born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, can hope to receive this benefit of nourishment and refreshment by this sacrament.

Observe, secondly, That one who is alive may not be in health; he may live, and yet be very infirm and sick. Thus are our souls subject to many weaknesses and diseases, even whilst they are spiritually alive. And whence shall they have health and strength, but from God? It is Christ that by the facrifice of himself hath procured this grace for us, and is ready to bestow it on all that diligently use the means which he hath ordained, such as the word, and prayer, and sacraments: and to this very end more particularly hath he instituted this facrament, for the communicating and applying to every one of us himself crucified, as our Saviour; and his Holy Spirit of grace, as our Comforter.

The strengthening that we hereby receive, is, first, a greater vigour and liveliness in the practice of all goodness: For who can consider how his blessed Saviour died on the cross, and shed his most pre-

cious blood for us, and that he hath left us this pledge of his love, and token of affurance of his mercy towards us, but he must find a new life foringing in his foul? What can more, when duly pondered, confirm and increase our faith, or inflame our love, or exalt our hope, than the thoughts of our crucified Redeemer? And these three, faith, love, and hope, will, if we have any life left in us, make us lively and active in his service, and zealous for his honour and glory, who died for us. In the next place, How may we be hence strengthened to resist all temptations? Who can call to mind how the eternal Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil, and to fet us free from his dominion and tyranny, and the flavery of fin, wherein he made us drudge for our own damnation; and that he instituted this holy sacrament for our better affurance hereof, and as an euchariftical facrifice, or rite of thanksgiving for this great mercy, and as a federal ceremony for the renewing our covenant to forfake the devil, the wicked world, and finful lusts of the flesh; but he must abhor to give place any more to the devil, and by yielding to temptations, to enflave himself again to him? He hath always this answer in readiness, whenever he is tempted to fin: I have drunk of the Lord's cup, I have been partaker of the Lord's table; I cannot therefore any more partake of the cup and table of devils. Thirdly, Hereby also we may be strengthened to suffer manfully whatsoever evil shall befall us: Who can behold the fad tragedy of our Saviour's fufferings represented to him in this facrament, and think withal of those eternal and unexpressible joys, into which he is entered after all his fufferings, and whereof he doth hereby affure him, that he shall both in foul and body, after death, partake with him; but he must by thefe

these hopes be strengthened and encouraged to endure any thing for a while on earth, whether in gratitude for his Saviour's love, or for the longing he hath for that state of glory, which he shall,

when he hath overcome, enter into?

A living man often stands in need of some refreshment. He may be a-thirst, or faint, or dangerously wounded, and lose much blood, and want fresh supplies of moisture, spirits, and blood. may our fouls, first, thirst and pant after God, even as the hart after the water-brooks, Plat. xlii. 1, 2. for freer and fuller communications of his grace: Our fouls may gasp after God, as a thirsty land. Full of infirmities, finking under afflictions, affaulted by temptations, and the fiery darts of the devil, and longing for the light of God's countenance, they find in this holy facrament the blood of Jesus. and therein fresh springs, a well of living waters. They behold him as pointing and directing them to his own promise. He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, John vii. 37, 38. And that other, John iv. 14. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, hall never thirft; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life. These and the like promises of the Holy Spirit, and spiritual strength and comfort, he finds confirmed by drinking of that blood of Christ sacramentally in this feast, wherewith the truth of them hath been fealed.

Again, Our fouls with fadness reflecting on our manifold and provoking sins, often fall into distracting sears and doubts, and tremble at the thoughts of our guiltiness, fainting under them as an intolerable burden. But now in this sacrament we see our blessed Saviour, and great Physician of our souls, offering a most comfortable cordial made of his own blood, and saying, Come unto me, all ye

that labour, and are beavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. xi. 28. O this is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to fave sinners, I Tim. i.

15.

Laftly, Our fouls are often even deadly wounded by our often repeated fins, and that after our folemn renewing of our vows. Hereby they lose much blood, and our spiritual life decayeth, and we are even at death's door, and on the brink of despair. Yet beholding the table of the Lord fpread before us, and having, after God's gracious forbearance of us, received a new invitation to it, we begin to revive at the hearing of these most comfortable words, If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our fins, I John ii. 1, 2.

In short, This (faith Christ) is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. When he faith, Drink ye all of it, he faith in effect, Hereby is new fealed unto you the covenant of grace in my blood. And let this be a pledge unto you, that I will write my laws in your hearts, or bestow upon you more and more grace to love and keep them; and your fins and your iniquities I will remember no more. but they shall be pardoned for my fake. My Father will be your God, and you shall be his people, for whom he hath in store, and hereby giveth you a new affurance of, an eternal inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

The benefits then, that we receive by the facrifice of Christ's death, are our justification, sanctification, and falvation. And the benefits of this facrament are the strengthening and refreshing of our fouls by the body and blood of Christ, that is, by the facrifice of Christ herein, not only commemorated, but particularly communicated

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and applied to the foul of every faithful commu-

nicant, fincerely renewing his vow.

And here it is fit again to warn you to take heed of being deluded by the Quakers, as they have fadly been by some who were too cunning for them. They have learned to speak very scornfully of facraments, and they tell us with a great deal of confidence, that Christ's body and blood are not to be eaten and drunk sacramentally, as we do, but spiritually only. Neither is it the body broken, and blood shed of Christ crucified on the cross, that we are to eat and drink spiritually, according to them; but something in themselves,

which they call Christ in them.

If all this which they fay be true, defire them to tell you to what end, and with what fenfe, St. Paul doth warn the Corinthians (I Cor. xi.) to take beed lest they should eat the bread, and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily? Lest in eating and drinking of that bread, and that cup, which he had bleffed and broken, and taken, and given to them to eat and to drink, they should not discern the body of the Lord, and thereby become guilty of the body and blood of Christ? Here, he must needs suppose it their duty to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, which was an outward eating and drinking, fuch as these men deride. Next, he affirms, that to eat of that bread, and to drink of that cup unworthily, is so to eat and drink of them, as not to discern the body of Christ; and that they who so eat and drink, are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and eat and drink damnation, or judgment, to themselves. Now ask them, whether, if what they teach be true, that Christ's body and blood are not to be eaten and drunk facramentally, but spiritually only, they must not suppose St. Paul to discourse here, as they are wont to do, idly, and as one of a crazed brain?

For the' the outward and facramental eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood under the fymbols of bleffed bread and wine, will profit a man nothing without the spiritual eating thereof inwardly by faith (for this is an unworthy eating and drinking without difcerning the Lord's body, against which St. Paul warns men); yet, as we are principally concerned to eat and drink spiritually. the thing spoken of St. John in the fixth chapter, because otherwise we shall not really and indeed eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, but only the naked figns of them, bread and wine; fo are we concerned to eat and drink too, facramentally, the body and blood of Christ, in eating and drinking bread and wine, the confecrated fymbols of his body and blood; or elfe we must think St. Paul took a great deal of pains about nothing.

All who eat and drink Christ's flesh and blood fpiritually, do most certainly eat and drink worthily, and are again affured of everlafting life, John vi. And therefore, if there be no other kind of eating and drinking them, there can be no fuch thing as unworthy eating and drinking them. If then we will allow St. Paul to speak sense, and to any purpose, we must confess he speaks of the sacramental eating and drinking, which may be done ei-

ther worthily or unworthily.

When they tell us, that bread and wine cannot reach the foul; and that the bread fet on the table is not living bread, such as Christ giveth; and that we are not to labour for the meat which perisheth. but for that which endureth to eternal life; and a great deal more such impertinent stuff; tell them. That if they had ever understood the facred truths contained in this catechism, which is taught you, they would, in all likelihood, never have run into fuch groß mistakes in matters of religion, as now they do. Who amongst us can be fo foolish,

foolish, as to imagine that bread can reach (I suppose they mean, feed and nourish) the soul, as they would make ignorant people believe that we teach? Do not all of us know, that bread is no more but bodily nourishment? Doth not this catechism teach it in these words—as our bodies are strengthened and refreshed by the bread and wine? Who knows not, that the bread fet upon the table, is not the living bread which Christ giveth, that is, that it is not Christ himself? 'Tis fet there only according to Christ's own institution, to be an outward visible sign of his body, as the catechism teacheth you. They are strangely filly, if they think, that this is the bread which we labour for in coming to this holy table of the For tho, as bread is bodily food, it is in its due place and manner to be laboured for, yet is it another fort of bread, even Christ crucified, that in this facrament we come to feed upon. And we do labour for strength and nourishment to our fouls by coming after this manner to feed on him. because he hath commanded us so to do.

Q. What's the danger of eating and drinking un-

worthily?

A. Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord; and eateth and drinketh damnation, or judgment, to himself, not discerning the Lord's body, 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29.

Q. What mean you by damnation or judgment?

A. That for this cause many are weak and fickly among us, and many sleep, or die, 1 Cor. xi. 30.

Q. Shall not every one that eateth unworthily be

eternally damned?

A. If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord; and when we are judged, G g we

6. That you may the better understand all this. you are to take notice, That there may be a twofold unworthy receiving of this holy facrament: The former of these is, when it is received by the unbelieving or impenitent, who have no manner of right or title to it; all fuch perfons who believe not in Christ, or who are not resolved to live holy and christian lives, do most abominably profane this holy ordinance, by prefuming to approach unto the Lord's table : These, if they do not repent, and be not converted, do certainly hereby add so much to their other wickedness, that their damnation and torments will be the greater for it : Another fort of unworthy receiving is, that of them who, being fincere christians, yet on some account or other have not taken that pains with themselves, which they should have taken, to put their fouls into a posture so suitable to this divine ordinance, as they should in all reason have been; they confidered not enough the excellency of that heavenly food they there came to feast upon; nor endeavoured to excite in themselves such an hungering and thirsting after it as became them; they had not at prefent that high veneration for their crucified Jesus, neither that warmth of affection, and fervency of love, which his wonderful love in shedding his blood for their souls should have raised up in them; they took not pains enough in examining themselves to find out their fins; neither confidered they enough the heinousness of every fin, as they should have done, to fill their souls with a godly forrow, and a true contrition, and a firm rejolution to forfake them utterly, and to shun for the future all the occasions of, or temptation to, a falling into the same or the like fins again:

again: in all this they became guilty of flackness in the performance of fo great a duty, and a too little regard to the body and blood of Christ, and of not putting a fufficient difference between this and other common feasts; now this is so great a fin, that who foever is guilty of it, not only loseth the present benefit and comfort of this sacred ordinance, but also incurs a very great guilt, and is made obnoxious to many temporal judgments, and severe chastisements, such as weakness and fickness of body, and the shortening of life: However, these things are to be accounted no more but fatherly chastisement, and are designed to bring fuch persons to a timely repentance, that they should not be condemned with the world. 1 Cor. xi. 32. But if they have not this effect on any who are guilty of this fin, this, as any other fin continued in, will bring them to eternal damnation.

Q. How may one prevent unworthy receiving? A. Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, I Cor.

Q. What then is required of them that come to

the Lord's supper?

A. To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former fins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men.

6. This holy facrament is (as you have been taught) one of the feals of the new covenant of grace; and you have learned how that, in a covenant, each of the covenanting parties obligeth himself to perform faithfully his part of the covenant: We cannot therefore expect any benefit by Gg 2 renewing

renewing and fealing again to the covenant, how often foever we do it, unless we be in earnest, and resolve indeed to do all that, which by the covenant we stand bound to do.

Altho' therefore it be our duty to receive this holy facrament, as often as we stand in need of it. and that is, even as often as we can meet with a fair opportunity of receiving it, for we always stand in need of it; yet may we receive it unworthily, by not receiving it as we ought to do, and not duly preparing ourselves for it. And again, though we receive it unworthily, as often as we receive it without due preparation; yet will not our unpreparedness excuse us from sin, if we receive it not: For whatsoever Christ hath by an express command made it our duty to do, he hath also made it our duty to prepare ourselves for the worthy doing of it; and we must not hope to be excused from one duty by the neglect of another; that is, from the duty of receiving this facrament worthily, by neglect of preparing ourielves fo to do.

The preparatory duty for the worthy eating and drinking of the bleffed bread and cup is, as you have learned from St. Paul, to examine yourselves; and for your better understanding of this duty of examining yourselves, you are to be put in mind

of these things following:

First, That to be able to examine yourselves, you must needs have a competent stock of knowledge; for how can you be able to examine yourselves in what you do not understand? If you understand not what those things are, about which you are to examine yourselves, it is in vain for you to go about it; and that which you are to examine yourselves in, is, all that which is essential to the covenant of grace, the principles of your christian faith, the particulars of your christian duty.

duty; and moreover, the nature, use, and ends of this holy sacrament, with the necessary qualifications for the due receiving of it; so that whosoever continueth in ignorance of these things, cannot come worthily to this holy table: And this sheweth you again the great necessity of being well catechised or instructed.

Secondly, That as many of you as continue ignorant of these things through your own neglect of learning them, after that you are come to such a ripeness of age and judgment, as that you are capable of being taught them, can no more go to heaven, and be saved by Christ, than you can eat and drink worthily at the Lord's table; so that to be unworthy or unsit for this sacrament, is all one, in such wilfully ignorant persons, with being unworthy or unsit for mercy and eternal life; and in what a sad condition then are all such ignorant

persons?

Thirdly, You are to be minded of this, that by a man's examining himself is not meant a bare examining, and nothing elfe, as if this alone would make him a worthy communicant: One may examine himself, and by this examination he may find himself to be a very wicked man, and altogether unfit to partake in fo holy an ordinance; and certainly for one to know himself to be unworthy, cannot make him worthy of this facrament: To examine, is to try and prove; as we use to do gold or filver by the touch-stone; and that to this end, that we may not be abused, takeing the bad instead of the pure and good: To examine ourselves, is by trial and inquiry into ourselves to make ourselves as sure as we can be, that we are indeed fuch as God will through Christ accept of, such as have a right to this facrament, and fuch as may come worthily to it, and reap the benefits of it.

Fourthly, That the particulars wherein we are principally concerned to examine ourselves, are those things, which if we have, they shew us to be good christians: If we find ourselves upon examination to be good, that is, fincere christians, there is no question but we have a right to this facrament, and may be worthy communicants: Now the things which shew us to be sincere christians, and consequently, that we may be worthy communicants, are these five: True repentance of former fins, a stedfast purpose of a new life, a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, a thankful remembrance of Christ's death, and lastly,

charity towards all men.

1. You are to examine and try, if you truly repent of all your former fins; and this you must do after this manner; you must have before your eyes, or in your thoughts, the laws of God; then you must call to mind, as well as you can, your thoughts, words and actions; the inward frame of your hearts and spirits, and the outward course of your life and conversation in the world; and see how fuitable or unfuitable they have any of them been to those holy laws; by this means you will be able to find out what fins you have been guilty of, and are now to repent of; and having discovered your fins, you are, in the next place, to bring yourselves to a godly sorrow for them; you must confider them with all their aggravating circumstances, as committed against the greatest goodnefs, and the highest authority in the world, even of God, the author of our being, and well-being; long continued in against all God's patience and long fuffering; committed against knowledge of their evil, and conscience checking you for it; often repeated after your resolutions and vows to the contrary, notwithstanding many admonitions and chastifements; yea, and many helps and encouragements

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encouragements to lead a more holy life, &c. We are then to try, if all these thoughts in us of our sins make us truly forry for them, and humble us with a grievous sense of our own vileness and baseness; if we really hate our sins, and are angry with ourselves for being guilty of them, desire and resolve to forsake them, and with this resolution consess them, pray for grace to leave them,

and beg God's pardon for them.

2. You are to try if you stedfastly purpose to lead a new life, which if you do not, you must not think that you have repented; he repents not of his fin, that continueth in it; you must therefore purpose to amend whatsoever hath been amis; and fee to it, that your purpose be fincere and unfeigned; you must not purpose to live well a good while hence, but you must purpose for all the time to come, beginning just then, and not driving all off to another day: Moreover, you must have no secret reserve with yourself, in favour of any one darling fin or lust; you must not stick at making restitution to your neighbours for any wrong you have done them, nor at making an open confession of your sin, when it is needful; no fear of either cost, or shame, or punishment, must keep you from making good your purpose to live a christian life: If then you find, after mature deliberation, you have fuch a fincere purpose to live well, if you pray very fervently for spiritual strength to do fo, if you diligently use all the helps you can get to that end, and if you watch circumfpectly over yourselves, and against temptations; if you resolve to make the law of God the rule of your life and actions; then are you a fit guest to be entertained and feasted at the Lord's table.

3. You are to examine if you have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ; if you firmly believe,

believe, that God is in his nature most loving. and good, and gracious, and bears a great goodwill to mankind; fo that he delighteth not in the death of a finner, neither is he willing that any one should perish; and therefore, notwithstanding all your past sins, he will upon your sincere repentance, and new obedience, and confiding in his goodness, and the merits of your Saviour Jesus Christ, shew you mercy for his fake: If, I fay, you believe, that God in love hath fent his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of finners; and that he by his death on the cross for you hath made an atonement for your fins, and given fufficient satisfaction to his Father, who will therefore through his intercession, as your Advocate with him in heaven, impute your faith unto you for righteousness, grant you pardon of all your fins, and grace to strengthen you in your christian course, and carry you through this world unto his heavenly kingdom: If you find, that this faith in you is indeed a lively faith, not only a ftrong confidence grounded on the fure promises of God, fealed in the blood of Christ; but also operative, putting you upon a vigorous performance of your part in the new covenant; inflaming your heart with the most ardent love to God, and zeal for his honour, because of his unexpressible love to you in Jesus Christ; and if it give you no rest in your foul, till you testify, all the ways you can, your acknowledgment of his goodness: If, I say, you find in you such a faith as this, together with repentance, and a stedfast purpose of new obedience; this is your general preparation for worthily communicating in this holy facrament: And yet, besides this, it is very fit there should be a more particular preparation for fo great a Duty. Therefore,

You are to examine, whether there be in you, as always there ought to be, fo now more especially, when you are coming to the holy table, a thankful remembrance of Christ's death: For this facrament was ordained (as you were taught before) for a continual remembrance of the facrifice of his death: Now then it becomes you in a more eminent manner to remember, what you should never forget; now you should even imagine you fee with your own eyes the bleffed Son of God nailed to the tree between two thieves, wounded, bleeding, dying, in the extremest pains of body; yet chearfully refigning his foul to God, that he might rescue such wretched creatures as fin had made us, from the flavery of the devil, and the mouth of hell: Now should you endeavour to feel his wounds and pains in your own hearts: How should the remembrance of his dying for you stir up all your affections at once? How should it raise up in you the greatest admiration of his even aftonishing love, pity and compassion, manifested by the shedding of his most precious blood for us unworthy finners? What a neverdying love should it kindle in our hearts towards our loving Jesus? With what a piercing forrow and grief should every fin we have committed wound us, for wounding our gracious Redeemer? What an indignation at our own baseness, and vile ingratitude, in finning against so great love and mercy? What a shame, what fear to offend in like manner any more? What a zeal to be as forward for the time to come in honouring him in some proportion to the dishonouring of him, which we have been at any time guilty of? What a chearfulness in devoting ourselves, and all we have, to his service? If you can feel your hearts touched to the quick with fuch a sense of his suf-

terings as this, and now come to his holy table to

have this fense revived, and more indelibly imprinted on your fouls, you need not doubt of a gracious welcome, nor of receiving the bleffing.

you come for.

5. You are in the last place to examine, how far you are in charity with all men: An univerfal charity to all the world is a necessary christian duty; and we should all of us, that are christians. every facrament bind ourselves anew to perform it: The death of our bleffed Saviour, which in this facrament of the Lord's supper we commemorate, should put us in remembrance of this duty of loving all men, yea, even our most imbittered enemies: He thus gave himself a ransom for all. and was the propitiation for the fins of the whole world; whilst we were ungodly finners and enemies. Christ died for us: Try then yourselves, if you have this spirit of your gracious Lord and Saviour in you; if you heartily wish and pray for the good of all men, not only their eternal happiness. but even their temporal prosperity, so far as in may be confistent with God's honour, the flourishing of religion, and the eternal salvation of their fouls: Try, if you wish all men as happy as you yourselves desire to be; and if you do your endeavour to make them fo, doing them as much good both in foul and body, as you have power and opportunity to do; if you forgive heartily all that have offended you, and defire to be reconciled unto you; and if you be ready to ask forgiveness, as there is occasion; yea, to give full fatisfaction, and make restitution, where-ever you have done wrong.

Let us now hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for

this is the whole duty of man. 28 SE60

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